Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you like the final design chosen for the CNMI commemorative quarter?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

'I Do'
Dozens of gay couples are married Monday night in California.

NATION...Page 14

Flooded China
Weeks of rain pushed rivers over their banks in China, displacing more than 1.27 million people.

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Funnymen
Yes, nation, our sharpest satirists are ramping up for the election.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 19

Bad at being a criminal, thief urged to change 'jobs' PAGE 3

'Put Tinian lawyer on Lizama's vacated post' PAGE 5

New owner soon for Gardenia

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

The now defunct Pacific Gardenia Hotel could soon have a new owner once government officials with the Commonwealth Development Authority settle litigation with the property's former manager.

A confidential government source says the CDA is poised either to sell or lease the hotel to an already approved buyer after a June 24 court hearing that will resolve whether the agency must further pay Rex Palacios for his management of the property.

The pending transaction will be based on the price tag CDA listed in a recent advertisement

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SLEEPY ACTIVIST JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Oblivious to her surroundings, 2-week-old Beckyan Camacho sleeps quietly on her mother's chest during a community forum organized by Rep. Tina Sablan and Ed Propst to discuss short-term and long-term solutions to the Commonwealth's power crisis inside the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe Tuesday night.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
The façade of the non-operational Pacific Gardenia Hotel in Chalan Kanoa.

CUC privatization bill hurdles House

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives rushed to passage yesterday a bill requiring the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to issue a privatization bid within 45 days of the bill becoming law.

The House voted 16-3 to approve the bill. Representatives Francisco Dela Cruz, Tina Sablan, and Edward Salas voted against the bill, and Rep. Justo Quitugua was absent.

The House-approved bill would allow CUC to sell its power system for at least $250 million, half the minimum value proposed in the original version of the bill. The bill calls for a bid process, a departure from the request-for-proposals procedure CUC had used in its previous privatization efforts.

Hocog

See CUC on Page 4

Panel treads softly as it tackles immigration bill

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

A legislative committee is moving cautiously with a controversial bill that proposes to grant improved immigration status to

See PANEL on Page 4

AP
Isaac Stevens is photographed at his Operation Homefront apartment in San Antonio, Wednesday, March 19, 2008.

Soldiers risk ruin while awaiting benefit checks

By MICHELLE ROBERTS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—His lifelong dream of becoming a soldier had, in the end, come to this for Isaac Stevens: 28,

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Local

Salas: 'Opportunity knocks' with Pew monument

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

The Pew Charitable Trust's bid to establish a national marine monument in the Northern Marianas Islands is an "opportunity" that could bolster the Commonwealth's economy through a boost in tourism, said former Guam senator John Salas in a forum on the plan Tuesday.

"When opportunity knocks, jump," Salas said during the forum, held at a Rotary Club meeting in the Hyatt Regency Saipan. "You either want it or you don't. And are we at the point here in these islands where we can ignore it?"

The Pew Trust's proposal—an attempt to capitalize on President Bush's so-called "Blue Legacy" of ocean preservation before the end of his term—has drawn opposition from some locals and government officials, including Gov. Benigno Fitial, who say it will block any future fishing or mining activities in the 115,000 square miles of the proposed area.

Yet proponents of the plan are hoping to rally support for it with a recently unveiled economic analysis that suggests the monument could create new jobs and garner millions of tourism dollars for the Commonwealth each year.

"The islands here survive on tourism and there's all this desire to get more tourists," Salas said. "You want a resource here that can be used and can be used very effectively to sell passages for both local and international tourists."

On the key issue of whether the proposed monument will bar economic activity, Salas noted the three uninhabited islands within the monument's proposed boundaries are already a protected area.

"If they were federalized, they would be the same tomorrow as they are today," he said. "The federal government does not intend to come in and take over those islands. It's simply saying that those three northern islands

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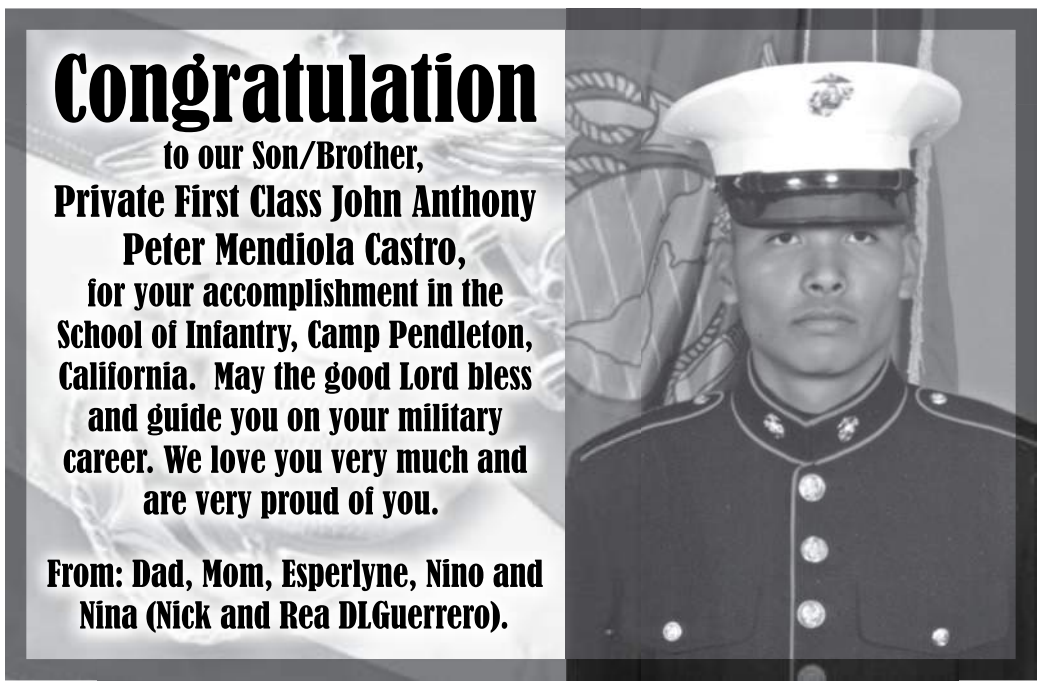
Congratulation
to our Son/Brother,
Private First Class John Anthony
Peter Mendiola Castro,
for your accomplishment in the
School of Infantry, Camp Pendleton,
California. May the good Lord bless
and guide you on your military
career. We love you very much and
are very proud of you.
From: Dad, Mom, Esperlyne, Nino and
Nina (Nick and Rea DLGuerrero).

WIA program lures more participants this year

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Workforce Investment Agency says this year's participation in the summer program exceeded last year's for all three islands combined by more than 60 percent.

Executive director Edith Deleon Guerrero said the agency expects the numbers to continue rising and that "the trend in school enrollments tell of the increasing numbers in the CNMI's youth population, thus the greater need and urgency to focus on youth programs that are proven successes throughout the country."

Deleon Guerrero said the increased participation in the WIA summer program happened because she has taken the initiative to "allow and embrace applicants as young as 14 years old to participate in the summer employment program." She said this is allowable under the WIA Act of 1998 for the youth funding program, of which the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program is considered one of the required 10 youth elements.

Student participants began work early this week and will earn $4.05 an hour for a period of six weeks.

According to Deleon Guerrero, "The overall benefiting factor that the summer program provides besides earning is the opportunity for the qualifying CNMI youth to learn the necessary skills to make them become competitive in the employment market in all areas: local, regional and global markets."

She said the idea is to prepare them early on and not wait until they are ready to exit high school.

"I truly believe that the sooner we invest in their education and training, the better prepared they will be when they enter the real business environment, thus my utmost support and dedication to communicate across all levels of the CNMI's public and private partners to follow in the same passion in building a talented and competitive CNMI workforce," said Deleon Guerrero.

Every year WIA provides workshops to summer participants in areas such as work ethics, telephone etiquette, personal grooming, customer service and basic financial literacy.

"I feel that by offering these workshops prior to placing them on the job, they will become better prepared when they report to work the first day. I believe in exposing the youth participants to the real business environment and expectations so that it does not come as a surprise to them when they report to work," Deleon Guerrero said.

Tinian 'ice' trafficker gets 6 months

The federal court imposed yesterday a six-month prison term on a man who admitted selling methamphetamine or "ice" on Tinian.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson said that after completing his prison term, Tian Yun Huang shall be placed on three years of supervised release.

Among the conditions of Huang's supervised release is that the 40-year-old Chinese national shall be delivered to an immigration official for deportation proceedings.

The judge also required the defendant to perform 200 hours of community service and not to commit another federal, state or local crime.

Munson directed Huang to immediately pay a $300 special assessment fee.

The judge remanded the defendant into the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

Huang was indicted on three counts of distribution of a controlled substance. He and court-appointed counsel Steven Pixley signed a plea agreement with the U.S. government. Last March he pleaded guilty to all charges.

According to the indictment, Huang sold "ice" on Tinian on Jan. 9 and twice on June 10, 2008. The total amount of "ice" in the three transactions was .39 grams.

A Drug Enforcement Administration special agent stated in his report that on Jan. 9, 2008, detectives from the Department of Public Safety debriefed a confidential source regarding "ice" traffickers on Tinian.

The source disclosed that a man known as Ma was distributing "ice" from his residence in Turn Key Housing in San Jose, Tinian. The agents later discovered that Ma was Huang. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Wakin's Bldg., Gualo Rai, Tel. 234-7145/7146/6293/6245
Saipan, MP 96950

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

ON AN APPLICATION FOR A QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE AUTHORIZING THE ABATEMENT AND REBATE OF CERTAIN CNMI TAXES

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that:

A. ***Public hearing.*** In accordance with the Investment Incentive Act of 2000, as amended, and pursuant to the rule-making procedures of the Administrative Procedures Act, the Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA) will conduct a public hearing at the *Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe, Saipan*, on *Thursday, June 26*, 2008, at *10:00 a.m.* on the application of *Saipan Laulau Development, Inc. d.b.a. Laolao Bay Golf Resort*, Applicant, for a Qualifying Certificate, which request is for tax relief by way of abatement and rebate of CNMI taxes in consideration of Applicant's proposed *construction and operation of a golftel facility, including the renovation of its existing 36-hole golf course*, all pursuant to the Investment Incentive Act of 2000, as amended, and as set out in the Applicant's application for a Qualifying Certificate.

B. ***Nature of hearing.*** This hearing shall be open to the public. Oral or written statements will be received from anyone wishing to testify thereat, which statement will be incorporated into the records of the hearing.

C. ***Further information.*** For further information, please contact CDA's Acting Chief Executive Officer at 234-7145/7146/6293/6245, or at the CDA office at Wakin's Building, Gualo Rai, Saipan.

/s/ Oscar C. Camacho
Acting Chief Executive Officer

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust have scheduled a Board of Trustees Regular Meeting to be continued on Thursday, June 19, 2008 beginning at 6:30 PM on the 1st Floor of the Morgen Building, Suite #106; Saipan, MP.

Original Meeting Date: June 10, 2008

The following agenda is hereby established:

I PRELIMINARIES
- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Minutes

II CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
- Office Space Matters
- Administrative/Board Matters

III CONSULTANT REPORTS
- Legal Counsel Reports*
- APLE 501
- Home Loan Program
- Board Consultant Reports
- Financial Statements – April 2008
- Flash Reports – April 2008

IV OLD BUSINESS
V NEW BUSINESS
VI EXECUTIVE SESSION
At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.
VII MISCELLANEOUS
VIII ADJOURNMENT

* It is anticipated that the following matters will be discussed under Executive Session in its entirety.

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body.

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Alvaro A. Santos
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Two firms sue CRMO over Obyan project

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Two private corporations have sued the Coastal Resources Management Office for stopping the operation of their Obyan site, the staging area for the two companies' construction activities project.

Hayden Corp. and its sister corporation, GPPC Inc., asked the Superior Court to review CRMO's decision and rescind its order.

Hayden and GPPC, through counsel Mark Hanson, asked the court to issue a finding that their activities at the Obyan site does not constitute a "quarry" as that term is found in the CRMO regulation.

The plaintiffs also asked the court to declare that the "quarries" stated in the CRMO regulation is unenforceable due to vagueness.

Hayden acquired a long-term leasehold interest in a lot located at Obyan on May 29, 2007. Hayden acquired the site with the intent that its sister corporation, GPPC, would develop the site as a staging area for GPPC's construction activities on the island.

Hanson said that consistent with the Division of Environmental Quality permit, GPPC excavated limestone material at the site and removed the material to other permitted sites, reusing the material for its ongoing construction projects.

The lawyer said GPPC has not sold any limestone material excavated from the site to any third party for any use.

"GPPC does not have as any part of its business the production and sale of quarried limestone products," he said.

Hanson said that upon completion of the staging area—as specified in the Earthmoving and Erosion Control Commercial Permit Application (EEC application)—there won't be a large, unused hole in the ground.

"There will actually be a staging area for construction material and heavy equipment. The staging area will have a warehouse, batch plants, storage facilities and a large ponding basin," he explained.

Hanson said that on Feb. 5, 2008, CRMO director John B. Joyner sent GPPC a letter ordering GPPC "to immediately cease all quarrying activities" at Obyan. That day, Hanson said, a congressman had called Joyner to raise some of his constituents' concerns about certain aspects of the project.

Hanson said that GPPC, through its counsel, immediately responded that the company was not conducting any quarrying activities. It asked CRMO for clarification.

On Feb. 9, 2008, GPPC ceased all excavation at the site.

Hanson said that on Feb. 21, 2008, GPPC received a letter from CRMO's attorney advising GPPC that it cannot further excavate any material from the site until the company explains what it will do with the excavated material.

On April 16, 2008, CRMO administrative hearing officer Linn Asper held a hearing. Asper affirmed the notice and order to cease.

Asper also ordered the corporations to stop with their staging area project without first applying for a CRM major siting permit.

Hanson said that CRMI's order is "arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion and not otherwise in accordance with the law." He asserted that the order is unsupported by substantial evidence.

Bad at being a criminal, thief urged to change 'jobs'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo has told a convicted criminal to change his "job category" because he is not a good thief since he always gets caught.

"You're not a good criminal! You've got to find a real, honest job!" Govendo told Calistro Acosta Crisostomo, who pleaded guilty Monday to burglary and theft.

The judge said the police already know how Crisostomo operates as a thief, making him easy to catch.

"They know you're not a good criminal!" Govendo told the 24-year-old defendant.

Govendo sentenced Crisostomo to two years in prison, with credit for time already served in prison, and placed him on 10 years of probation.

He said the defendant is prohibited from drinking any alcoholic beverages during the probation period. "When you get out from jail, do not celebrate and drink alcohol. It's the alcohol that lands you in trouble," Govendo said.

The judge required the defendant to pay a $1,000 fine plus court costs and probation fees.

He also ordered Crisostomo to perform 200 hours of community service and to write a letter of apology to the victim, Marianas Cable Vision. Govendo also directed Crisostomo to pay $3,785.98 in restitution to MCV.

Govendo described Crisostomo and his two co-defendants, Joseph Acosta Crisostomo and William Jerome T. Deleon Guerrero, as not good at being criminals. "None of you are very good thieves."

Crisostomo and counsel Danilo Aguilar signed a plea agreement. He pleaded guilty to burglary and theft.

As part of the agreement, the conspiracy to commit burglary was dismissed. The other 2007 criminal case was also dismissed. The defendant has another pending criminal case.

According to the plea agreement, Crisostomo and his co-defendants burglarized MCV between Sept. 10 and 11, 2006, and stole a safe box containing $34,319.25 in U.S. currency, checks, and credit card payments.

Mark Birmingham of MCV called the Department of Public Safety on Sept. 11, 2006, to report the burglary.

Detective Juan M. Santos stated in court papers that, based on preliminary investigation, the perpetrators gained entry by prying open the system manager's office window, located on the second floor by the air-conditioner area.

One of the suspects, however, left a waist pouch behind on a chair inside the office.

The safety box containing collections in sales in cash, checks and credit card payments was missing from the system manager's office.

Detective Santos said that, during an interview with a woman on May 8, 2007, in another criminal case, she was asked if she has any knowledge of other crimes being committed.

The woman told police the three defendants were responsible for the MCV burglary. The woman said she heard the defendants bragging about it and how they did it.

Deleon Guerrero, alias Bill, allegedly said they need to go back to the scene because he forgot his waist pouch inside the MCV office.

The woman said Deleon Guerrero claimed there was no identification in the pouch but that police would get his fingerprints from it.

Joseph Crisostomo apparently told Deleon Guerrero not to worry because local police don't have the equipment for fingerprint identification.

On June 12, 2007, the detective showed the pouch to the woman and she immediately identified it as Deleon Guerrero's.

In April 2008, Govendo sentenced Deleon Guerrero to five years in prison, all suspended except for 14 months. Deleon Guerrero was given credit for six days he had already served in prison. He signed a plea agreement with the government and pleaded guilty to burglary.

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Term limits for BOE may be on Nov. ballot

A legislative initiative limiting the term of office for Board of Education members may be on the ballot when the Commonwealth picks its first-ever congressional delegate on Nov. 4.

The proposed constitutional amendment cleared the Legislature last year, but did not make it to the 2007 election.

Julita Villagomez, the acting executive director of the Commonwealth Election Commission, said the initiative must be placed on the ballot for ratification on Nov. 4, 2008.

She asked the Legislature to appropriate $25,000 for the needed public education on the initiative.

The initiative proposes to limit elected board members to two four-year terms. The initiative increases the education system's guaranteed budget from 15 percent to 25 percent of the general revenues of the Commonwealth. It also requires the government to make annual appropriations for the Public School System.

The initiative requires a majority of the votes cast to be ratified.

Proponents of a proposal to re-apply the Open Government Act to the Legislature are also hoping to get the popular initiative voted on this election.

It is not clear whether initiatives can legally be placed on the ballot in the delegate election. The Constitution requires that popular initiatives to amend a general law should be placed on the ballot at a regular general election. There is a debate as to whether the federal election in November is considered a "regular general election." ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

ERRATUM

In the press release published in yesterday's edition titled "Discovery Camp wraps up on Tinian" the sentence that stated "the Northern Marianas College and CRW provided equipment and science materials" should have read "the Northern Marianas College and CRM [Coral Resources Management]."

SOLDIERS

From Page 1

penniless, in a wheelchair, fending off the sexual advances of another man in a homeless shelter.

Stevens' descent from Army private first-class, 3rd Infantry Division, 11 Bravo Company, began in 2005—not in battle, since he was never sent off to Iraq or Afghanistan, but with a headfirst fall over a wall on the obstacle course at Fort Benning, Ga. He suffered a head injury and spinal damage.

The injury alone didn't put him in a homeless shelter. Instead, it was military bureaucracy—specifically, the way injured soldiers are discharged on just a fraction of their salary and then forced to wait six to nine months, and sometimes even more than a year, before their full disability payments begin to flow.

"When I got out, I hate to say it, but man, that was it. Everybody just kind of washed their hands of me, and it was like, 'OK, you're on your own,'" said Stevens, who was discharged in November and was in a shelter by February. He has since moved into a temporary San Antonio apartment with help from Operation Homefront, a nonprofit organization.

Nearly 20,000 disabled soldiers were discharged in the past two fiscal years, and lawmakers, veterans' advocates and others say thousands could be facing financial ruin while they wait for their claims to be processed and their benefits to come through.

"The anecdotal evidence is depressing," said Rep. John Hall, D-N.Y., who heads a subcommittee on veterans disability benefits. "These veterans are getting medical care, but their family is going through this huge readjustment at the same time they're dealing with financial difficulties."

Most permanently disabled veterans qualify for payments from Social Security and the military or Veterans Affairs. Those sums can amount to about two-thirds of their active-duty pay. But until those checks show up, most disabled veterans draw a reduced Army paycheck.

The amount depends on the soldier's injuries, service time and other factors. But a typical veteran and his family who once lived on $3,400 a month might have to make do with $970 a month.

Unless a soldier has a personal fortune or was so severely injured as to require long-term inpatient care, that can be an extreme hardship.

The Army, stung by the scandal last year over shoddy care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, has been working to help soldiers during the in-between period, said Col. Becky Baker, assigned to injured soldier transition at the U.S. Surgeon General's Office.

In a change in policy that took effect last August, the Army is allowing wounded soldiers to continue to draw their full Army paychecks for up to 90 days after discharge, Baker said. It is also sending more VA workers to Army posts to process claims more quickly, and trying to do a better job of informing soldiers of the available benefits and explaining the application process.

"We make certain that we've covered all the bases before we discharge the soldier," Baker said.

She acknowledged, however, that the changes have been slow to take hold across an Army stretched by war. "It's definitely a practice that is new. It takes awhile for new practices to be institutionalized," the colonel said.

Stevens was moved to the Operation Homefront apartment after a social worker at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii, acting on her own initiative, rescued Stevens from a homeless shelter there.

PANEL

From Page 1

long-time guest workers in the Commonwealth.

The House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Affairs has recently completed a series of public hearings on the bill, which would grant added flexibility to foreign workers in the Northern Marianas. The hearings were mostly tense, as local residents and guest workers presented their competing cases to lawmakers.

"This bill is a hot issue right now. It is definitely something we have to look into very carefully," said Rep. Rosemond B. Santos, chairwoman of House committee reviewing the bill.

Santos said the timing of the bill is a major concern for the committee. To have any impact, the Commonwealth bill must be signed into law before June 1, 2009, when the federal immigration law goes into full effect and supersedes all Commonwealth laws on the entry and exit of foreign workers.

She also said the committee has not received adequate information on how a new immigration category would affect public infrastructure and cost the government.

Co-sponsored by Reps. Tina Sablan, Heinz Hofschneider, Edward Salas and Victor Hocog, House Bill 16-96 proposes to allow long-time foreign workers to stay and work at will in the Commonwealth for five-year periods.

Foreign workers who have lived legally in the CNMI for at least five years and have met character requirements would be eligible for the "resident foreign national permit." Holders of this permit would not be able to apply for U.S. citizenship or permanent residency. They could be deported.

But they would able to live and work in the Northern Marianas, and stay on island even if they don't have a job. They would receive employment preference over other foreign workers. They can change employers freely. They can operate a business, be self-employed, and employ other foreign workers. They can bring immediate family members into the Commonwealth for the validity of their permit.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce has opposed the bill because it contradicts the stated intent of the new federal immigration, which includes phasing out the foreign contract worker program in the Commonwealth.

"We are troubled that, given the many and great crises facing our community today, the Commonwealth Legislature is debating an immigration measure with a maximum lifespan of less than one year," Chamber of Commerce president James Arenovski wrote in a comment submitted to the House committee.

"The Saipan Chamber of Commerce supports legitimate, qualified foreign investment, and it support continued access to a needed nonresident workforce. Unfortunately, this bill does nothing to promote either of these economic goals and furthermore contravenes recently enacted federal law," Arenovski added.

Federal Labor Ombudsman James Benedetto has spoken generally in favor of the bill. He said the bill would be good for the workers, as their status would no longer be tied to their employers. It would also be good for the employers, who would no longer have to pay annual permitting fees of $275 for each foreign worker. Further, it would be beneficial to the Department of Labor, since it will be relieved of the burden of processing thousands of permit and transfer applications.

But Benedetto said lawmakers must ensure that only workers with legitimate jobs benefit from the new permit status. He urged them to require proof of legitimate employment such asW-2 forms, tax returns, or pay stubs.

Rota Mayor Joseph Inos has also supported the bill, calling it "very commendable and important." He said the new immigration category grants overdue recognition to the long-time foreign workers.

"It is true that the resident foreign nationals have vested interest in the local community and are spending more of their earnings on island. They have also adjusted to the local custom and culture, which promotes family values and respect of our Commonwealth laws and regulations. It is recommended that the Legislature enacted this bill, as it will benefit all citizen and non-citizen workers in the CNMI," Inos said.

CUC

From Page 1

The bill would also restore the CUC board of directors.

Rep. Victor Hocog, one of the bill's proponents, said it is necessary to fast-track the privatization of CUC, as the utility is depleting government resources while failing to offer reliable and affordable service.

"[The] Commonwealth ratepayers deserve a utility that delivers high quality power on a 24/7 basis at reasonable prices, whose operations are open and transparent, whose books are balanced, whose audits are clean, and whose operations are reviewed by an independent regulator," the bill states.

But while the bill got overwhelming support in the Lower House, a few members raised concern about its quick passage.

Sablan, one of the three lawmakers who voted against the bill, said the privatization of the power utility is too important to rush. She noted that the bill cleared the House without a formal review by the responsible House committee, without a public hearing, and without comments being solicited from concerned government agencies. She also expressed concern about the lack of documentation to support the $250-million price tag given the power plants.

"Previous efforts to privatize CUC failed primarily because they were rushed and involved a multitude of procurement irregularities. By rushing this bill, I feel we're just repeating history," she said.

Salas also said he supports the intent of the bill, but believes more study is needed.

The bill now heads to the Senate for action.

NEW

From Page 1

it bought in the *Saipan Tribune*, which asks for starting bids of $1 million, the source said. However, the source declined to identify the buyer or provide more information.

Several interested parties have previously shown interest in the hotel, the source added, but offered too little for CDA to accept.

CDA took over the Pacific Gardenia Hotel and the attached El Segundo Restaurant after the property's original owner, Ronald Sablan, filed for bankruptcy.

Details on the upcoming transaction will likely surface at the hearing, the source said.

Meanwhile, attorneys for the CDA and Palacios are preparing for the hearing, to be held in Superior Court.

In a June 2 brief, the CDA lists a host of objections to paying Palacios further for his management of the property and other related costs.

Palacios took over the hotel as a court-appointed "receiver" in 2006 and struggled to keep the business afloat, according to prior news reports.

In the brief, CDA contends that Palacios "misrepresented the financial condition" of the hotel during his tenure as its manager and, despite his demand for payment, he agreed before assuming the position that he would be paid only from the proceeds of the hotel's operation, not from the CDA's funds. Moreover, the brief notes that Palacios was found "grossly negligent" for his failure to provide the Department of Labor with records and payroll statements.

"Such failures were commonplace" during Palacios' term as the hotel's receiver, the brief says. "CDA objects to [Palacios'] claims and to any further payment…"

Neither Palacios nor his attorney could be reached for comment as of press time.

SALAS

From Page 2

are surrounded by waters that are, by law, under the purview of the United States government and they want to be able to isolate the usage of them. But they aren't in use now. Are they?"

And the potential benefits to the Commonwealth outweigh its costs by 10 to 1, according to the Pew-funded analysis, authored by Dr. Thomas Iverson, a University of Guam economist.

Iverson's analysis, presented at the meeting, estimates the monument will attract $10 million in spending to the Commonwealth each year with annual costs of about $1 million.

"I just don't see a lot of cost to doing it," Iverson said. "It's an opportunity that most places would go after."

A finalized version of the Dr. Iverson's report will be available in two weeks, he added.

Iverson and Salas appeared to strike a chord with some members of the audience. Rotary Club member David Sablan said that despite recent local controversies over immigration and the federal minimum wage increase, the Commonwealth might not always want to shy away from federal initiatives.

"Somehow, we get the perception here that the word 'federalization' is a bad word," Sablan said. "And I think that has to change."

Framingham official visits NMC

Framingham State College associate vice president Dr. Scott Greenberg is on island to conduct a site visit of the Northern Marianas College master's education program.

According to Raymond D. Diaz, Community Development Institute coordinator and instructor, Greenberg will be on island from June 16 to 20 and will visit the education classes at NMC as an observer.

Association of Commonwealth Teachers president Betty Miller, who is working on her master's degree through the Framingham program, said the program is vital for teacher education in the CNMI.

"Its one of the first graduate level programs [in the CNMI] besides the University of Guam," Miller said.

Last month, NMC awarded degrees, diplomas, and certificates to 245 students, 27 of whom received their master's degree from the Framingham State College.

The Framingham educational program is a nine-course program designed for teachers to improve their skills in classrooms and throughout the whole education environment.

Courses include supervision, staff development and collaborative leadership; issues and strategies in reading and literacy instruction; special education in the regular classroom; creative teaching techniques and use of multimedia.

Greenberg is scheduled to meet with students under cohort 5 and 6 this evening at NMC Room D-1, from 6pm to 10pm.

Diaz said any alumni who may be interested in meeting with the Framingham official before or after the scheduled meeting may make arrangements with the CDI. ***(Rianne Pangelinan-Brown)***

'Put Tinian lawyer on Lizama's post'

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tinian lawmakers are lobbying Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to replace retired Judge Juan T. Lizama with an attorney from their island.

Sen. Joseph M. Mendiola, chairman of the Tinian Legislative Delegation, asked the governor to appoint the next judge from among the Tinian's pool of attorneys, which includes Lucia Blanco-Maratita, Ramon K. Quichocho, Joey Patrick San Nicolas, and Janet H. King.

"In the past, Tinian has not had any local attorneys and perhaps that has been the reason why we have not had a judge appointed who was from Tinian. However, within the last 10 years, Tinian has gained four new lawyers in our community through their diligence and commitment to ensuring that our people are no longer under-represented in the legal community," Mendiola said.

He said the four attorneys from Tinian have the qualifications to become the next Commonwealth Superior Court judge.

The Fitial administration has said it is not in a hurry to fill the vacancy left by Lizama. "I am sure [the governor] will consider it carefully and make the appointment in due course," said press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr.

Superior Court Associate Judge Juan T. Lizama stepped down from the bench on May 24, 2008, to run for the U.S. Congress. Lizama retired just 40 days short of his 10th year on the bench.

School break helps CUC's rotating outages

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The school vacation is helping the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. in managing the implementation of rotating outages on Saipan, according to CUC executive director Antonio Muna.

He said the school break allows CUC to have greater flexibility in alternating the hours for the different power feeders.

"With the schools up and running, what happens is you only isolate in the morning those areas with schools. Now that schools are on summer break, you can have a rotating schedule that would be independent," he said.

Muna said everybody is now sharing the load shedding schedule.

CUC has been implementing a two-hour load shedding schedule from 8am to 10pm everyday.

This year the opening of public schools will be in September in order for the Public School System save money on power.

The government and autonomous agencies reportedly owe CUC a total of $1.4 million in utility billings for the month of July and August 2007.

According to CUC records, of the government's $1,439,616 utility balance as of Aug. 31, 2007, PSS incurred the most, with $1,032,647.

Being the biggest agency, PSS has been consistently the top utility user among all government entities.

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4X4 Cab, AT, A/C, Sharp
$15,495

2007 HYUNDAI SANTA FE 7H040-D
2WD, SUV, AT, Power, Warranty
* SOLD *

2002 FORD FOCUS 2H0383
Wagon, AT, A/C, Power, Tinian
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4.4 quake hits NMI

A 4.4 magnitude earthquake shook parts of the Mariana islands yesterday at 11: 09am but there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

According to the Emergency Management Office, the earthquake had a preliminary magnitude of 4.4 on the Richter scale and had a depth of about 21.7 miles, located about 140 miles southwest of Anatahan, 115 miles west of Saipan, 120 miles northwest of Tinian and 105 miles northwest of Rota.

EMO said yesterday that, based on all available data, a destructive Pacific-wide tsunami is not expected and there is no tsunami threat to the Marianas.

The EMO said that one local resident called the office to verify the quake.

"A Saipan resident called at about 11:12am and asked if we had an earthquake. I checked the scale and it showed that we had," Geophysical Seismic Technician Section supervisor Juan Camacho told *Saipan Tribune*.

"This happened for a few seconds. I also did not even feel the earthquake. Only one resident called and asked regarding this matter," he added. ***(Jacqueline Dela Cruz)***

15 farmers and ranchers attend piggery workshop

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

At least 15 local farmers and ranchers took advantage of the free workshop on Effective Swine Husbandry Management Practices provided by the Northern Marianas College Cooperative, Research, Extension, and Education Service yesterday.

According to CREES veterinarian Dr. Allan C. Sabaldica, the workshop was intended to help farmers and ranchers in hog production and pest management.

The workshop was divided into two topics: Effective Swine Husbandry Management Practices in the Marianas educated participants about taking care of piglets, sows, and boars in different production stages that would maximize profits to producers.

The second workshop on Integrated Pest Management was incorporated with the workshop on hog production, enabling participants to learn about mitigation methods in relation to pests in crops.

Sabaldica said the workshop had a "great turnout and the participants were very happy."

The workshop was also in collaboration with the Western Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education Grant Opportunity.

NMC-CREES is scheduled to conduct the same workshop on Tinian on June 20 from 8am to 4pm, Room D at the NMC-Tinian Campus.

For more information on the workshops, call Sabaldica at 287-0556, Alejandro Bajilles at 287-0554, or Ross Manglona at 287-0552.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

NMC CREES Alejandro Badilles talks to farmers and ranchers during the Effective Swine Husbandry Management Practices and Integrated Pest Management Workshop at the NMC campus yesterday.

Covenant claims it remains the only party of the people

A day after Jack Villagomez resigned from the CNMI Republican Party over a Pew dispute with Pete A. Tenorio, the CNMI Covenant Party is saying that it is the only political party upholding the rights and interests of the people of the CNMI.

"As you can plainly see, some members of the CNMI Republican Party are endorsing the Pew Charitable Trust proposal that would forever strip the CNMI of control over its precious natural resources and opportunities for economic development," said Thomas J. Camacho, an officer of the party, in a statement issued yesterday.

Camacho, the party's second vice president, said the Covenant Party joins the CNMI Legislature, the Fitial Administration and, most recently, the Mayor of the Northern Islands in expressing grave reservations about the controversial and much debated Pew Charitable Trust proposal.

"The Pew Group is pushing a very hard sell," said Camacho. "They cannot take no for an answer."

Camacho also noted that the CNMI Covenant Party is the only political party to consistently oppose federalization of the CNMI's immigration and minimum wage laws.

"Many leaders of the CNMI Republican Party, especially Resident Rep. Pete A. Tenorio, openly endorsed the federalization of the CNMI and even backed the granting of permanent residency status for long-term guest workers," said Camacho.

Camacho noted that even Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider, a noted Republican, co-sponsored the Tina Sablan bill to grant alien workers long-term residency status. Rep. Ed Salas, another CNMI Republican, also co-sponsored the same bill.

Camacho said the CNMI Covenant party respects the CNMI's nonresident guest workers, but the workers should understand that they are here to supplement rather than replace the local workforce.

"Maximum local employment must be our first priority," said Camacho. "Nonresident workers should not be allowed to remain for five years if the CNMI market does not have jobs for them or if those jobs can be filled with local American or U.S. citizen-workers."

"When it comes to protecting the CNMI's vital interests, whether it be against the Pew Charitable Trust or long-term residency status for alien workers at the expense of local jobs, the Covenant Party remains the people's only choice," said Camacho. ***(PR)***

9TH ANNUAL ST. JUDE
GOLF TOURNAMENT

DATE: JUNE 21, 2008 (SATURDAY)
VENUE: LAOLAO BAY GOLF RESORT (WEST COURSE)
TEE TIME: 7:30 AM (SHOTGUN)
SHOW TIME: 6:00 AM
ENTRY FEE: $95.00 (Purchase By 6/20/08) - $110.00 (Tournament Day)

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A FLIGHT
B FLIGHT
C FLIGHT
1ST PLACE- $300.00 & TROPHY
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3RD PLACE- $100.00 & TROPHY

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Hearing set on bill for shooting ranges

The House Standing Committee on Commerce and Tourism will conduct a public hearing to receive testimonies for House Bill 16-31, which seeks to amend the Weapons Control Act to promote and allow resort developments that offer target ranges for competitive rifle competitions and skeet shooting.

The public hearing is scheduled on June 30, 2008 at 6pm in the House chamber on Capital Hill, Saipan.

Those who want to obtain a copy of the proposed legislation may request it from the Office of Rep. Joseph C. Reyes or download it from www.cnmileg.gov.mp. Requests for a digital copy via email may send the request to rep.jcreyes@gmail.com.

Members of the public are encouraged to submit written testimony on or before the public hearing. Oral testimony will be received during the public hearing. To submit written testimony prior to the public hearing, drop-off or fax to the Office of Rep. Joseph C. Reyes at 664-8838 or mail to P.O. Box 500586 Saipan MP 96950. One may also submit digital copies to rep.jcreyes@gmail.com.

For additional information, contact the Office of Rep. Joseph C. Reyes. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CNMI Scholarship Office announcement

Application deadline for all applicants to the Educational Assistance Program: New, ongoing, or returning is July 1. Deadline for supporting documents is Sept. 30.

Application and supporting Documents deadline for PL 14-37 Honors Scholarship Program is June 30.

For more information call 664-4750 or visit www.cnmischolarship.com. ***(PR)***

Guam realignment website

SANTA RITA, Guam—The Joint Guam Program Office now has its own Web site dedicated to the Guam military realignment. The site, www.jgpo.navy.mil, is designed to keep the public informed on the effort to relocate approximately 8,000 Marines and 9,000 family members from Okinawa to Guam.

The site features background information on the military realignment effort, updates on the Master Planning and environmental studies, and details on the efforts in Washington to increase support across the federal government to assist Guam as it prepares for increase in population. Also included on the site is a section of frequently asked questions. There, site visitors can submit questions and those that are the most common will be answered and posted to the site. Updates and additional information will be added to the site as they become available. ***(PR)***

LibDay parade applications now open

The 2008 Liberation Day Steering Committee is now accepting applications for the upcoming 2008 Liberation Day parade. Interested individuals, companies and/or organization may pick up an application at the Marianas Visitors Authority office from Monday to Friday, 8am – 5pm. The deadline to submit all application forms is June 27, 2008, no later than 5pm. For more information, contact Frank Tudela at (670) 664-3200/01 or e-mail via ftudela@mymarianas.com. ***(PR)***

Benito Clan reunion meeting

This is to inform the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Vicente Gogue Taitano and Juan Gogue Taitano—the "Benito Clan"—that the next meeting for the "Benito Clan" will be on June 18, 2008, at the residence of John and Michelle Tagabuel in Pasgua Court, Dandan, at 6pm.

Family members are urged to please attend this important meeting. For more information you may contact Eleanor Aldan Cepeda at 483-6358 or Cecilia Taitano Celis at 285-0607. ***(PR)***

9th Turquoise Blue Triathlon to be featured in Japan TV

Highlights of the recently held 9th annual Turquoise Blue Triathlon that took place on Tinian will be broadcast on TV Tokyo on July 13. The event will be shown during "The Way of King Solomon" program. The program is shown in 3,577,140 homes. The estimated value of this broadcast is $514,285.

This documentary TV program usually features celebrities, executives or academics that have successful careers and wisdom in enjoying their exciting life. The program will introduce a person as clever as King Solomon. In this shooting, the program will feature Hiromi, a successful comedian and businessperson who is enthusiastic about sports including triathlons. Web access to the show can be found at **http://www.tv-tokyo.co.jp/solomon/**.

The Marianas Visitors Authority acknowledged Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino, Northwest Airlines and Fiesta Resort & Spa for making this opportunity possible.

"We look forward to having the island of Tinian and the triathlon shown in Tokyo," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "Japan remains our No. 1 source market and with the upcoming launch of the Northwest Narita-Saipan night flight, the timing could not be better to showcase our destination." ***(MVA)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TV Tokyo takes a footage of the registration for the 9th annual Turquoise Blue Triathlon at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino.

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Pacific hit by high world food prices

WELLINGTON (AFP)—While leaders from around the world argued about how to blunt the impact of soaring food prices in Rome earlier this month, Pacific Islanders were wondering how they would feed their families.

In the Northern Mariana Islands, Lili George, a cook from the Philippines, said she was contemplating going home after 14 years in the capital Saipan.

"Food prices had gone up by over 50 percent recently," she said. "I am planning to go home if things don't get better in the next few months."

Janet Gogue, 31, a mother of four on the island of Guam, says she cannot keep up with the speed of price rises.

"In the last couple of months, food prices continue to go up and it seems like it never stops," Gogue said.

"The last time I bought a 50-pound (22.7-kilogram) bag of rice, it was just a little over 20 US dollars," she said. "I went shopping yesterday and found that the same bag now costs almost 30 dollars."

In the Marshall Islands, government power utility worker Ambi Amram is supporting a household of eight and used to bring home two 20-pound (9.1-kilogram) bags of rice every fortnight.

"Now, I can only afford one bag of rice that has to last us two weeks," he said.

He is supplementing meals with local foods such as breadfruit but in the crowded capital Majuro, there is hardly any spare space for people to grow their own food.

Local agriculture has dwindled on most Pacific islands in the face of cheap food imports.

But imports are no longer cheap thanks to the double whammy of much higher commodity prices -- especially for the islands' staple of rice -- and soaring fuel costs.

The New Caledonia-based regional organization, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, told the world food summit in Rome that urban poor in the Pacific Islands are the worst affected.

Many remote communities still largely rely on subsistence agriculture, growing their own crops and fishing. But rapid population increases has led to the growth of sprawling towns throughout the region.

"In Fiji, for example the poorest 10 percent of the population spend between 50 to 65 percent of their income on food whereas the richest 10 percent spend less than 20 percent on food," the SPC said.

-- High food prices could push more islanders into poverty --

A study by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) released last month found that recent increases in world food prices could push another five percent of low income families in the Pacific into poverty this year.

The leader of the study, ADB economist Craig Sugden, said the number of people who will be badly hurt will depend on the response of regional governments. But he warned it could be in the tens of thousands.

"A lot of people are going to suffer. They may go very hungry and face having a very poor diet," he said.

In Fiji, the military government has removed duties on basic food imports to reduce the impact of higher food costs.

From this month, duty has been removed on white and brown rice, tinned fish and cooking oil, and taxes have been removed from local eggs.

The country's military leader Voreqe Bainimarama has also appealed to Fijians to grow more of their own food.

"The only sustainable solution to combating rising food prices is to grow more of our own produce," he said.

Agriculture has been neglected in recent decades in the region and will take years to rebuild. For those who live on coral atolls, where soils are thin or nonexistent and water often in short supply, the options are limited.

Most islands can grow at least some root crops such as taro, however, and they may have to wean themselves off once cheap imported rice.

"For too long our children have been fed on rice as staple food because of the convenience of preparation and storage," President Manny Mori of the Federated States of Micronesia said recently.

"We have neglected our responsibility and even contributed to their lower health standards by failing to teach them to appreciate the natural food and bounty of our islands."

Cheap imported foods have been blamed for spiralling rates of obesity in the Pacific Islands, so a return to local traditional foods would also play an important part in improving the health of islanders.

World Health Organization figures show Pacific Island nations make up eight of the world's 10 most obese countries, and this has created soaring rates of previously nearly unknown problems including diabetes, stroke and heart disease.

But imports are likely to continue playing a big role in feeding the people of the Pacific islands as the region's population is forecast to grow to 14 million in the next 20 years, from the current 9.5 million. ***(Agence France-Presse)***

THE ISLANDS' PRIDE
Division Command Sergeant Major Vice F. Camacho, a local son and an accomplished member of the elite Ranger in the U.S. Army, is shown here with U.S. first lady Laura Bush. Sen. Pete Reyes a couple of years ago presented a resolution to Sgt. Vince Camacho for his distinguished performance during the "Best Ranger" competition nationwide. Indeed, we are proud of Vince.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Solomons losing million to logging firms

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Times/PIR)—Transparency Solomon Islands is disappointed that the government has backed down and given in to logging companies as it has not increased the Determined Value of logs as has been gazetted.

"By failing to increase the determined log price the country and tree owners are losing millions of dollars," the TSI said in a statement. "TSI has been calling for politicians to stop interfering in the log price and allow it to be set by a transparent and independent process."

The statement went on to say that the new schedule showed only a slight increase in the average determined value, from US$71 to US$78 per cubic meter. "To reflect the true market value a further increase to US$85 should be effective as of 1st of June. TSI understands that Schedule 33 which contains further increase on June 1st has not been implemented due to pressures from logging companies," the statement reads.

TSI says that it is calling on the responsible Ministers to exercise their power to act in the interest of the land owners and the country.

The local media recently reported that the low Determined Value on logs in a loss of at least SBD$120million in 2007.

World prices (CIF) are currently around US$150 for first grade logs.

Samoa PM apologizes to Solomons

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (Solomon Times/PIR)—Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Dr. Derek Sikua, has received a condolence message from the Prime Minister of Samoa, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, after the tragic and untimely death of a young nurse.

The young 26 year old trainee nurse was killed last Friday night in a traffic accident involving a vehicle driven by a Samoan police officer serving with RAMSI.

A statement from the Prime Minister's Office in Honiara said that the condolence message from the Samoan Prime Minister and his Government is for the Government of Solomon Islands and the family of the deceased.

"Words are not enough to convey the depth of our regret and sorrow that an officer from Samoa sent to Honiara as part of our contribution to help has instead caused the terrible anguish to your people and Government," the Samoan Prime Minister said in the statement.

The Samoan Prime Minister has requested the Solomon Islands Prime Minister to convey his government's deepest apology and condolence to the family and relatives over the tragic loss of their daughter.

Sikua has acknowledged the condolence message from the Prime Minister of Samoa and will in turn convey the message to the family of the deceased.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

June 18, 1999

Gov't. prodded to impose new taxes and cut rebates

The government must impose new taxes and slash rebates to raise badly-needed revenues for its infrastructure development in the next few years as part of a comprehensive economic strategy for the Northern Marianas, according to a report to be released next month. While the study has recommended ways to meet the demand, it has also criticized the government for not spending a substantial share of its budget for the infrastructure needs as well as maintenance of existing facilities of the island.

Chamber backs employer-employee sharing of health cost

With many businesses already reeling from the effects of Asia's economic crisis, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce yesterday threw out its support on a proposed measure that will provide equal sharing of health insurance between employers and employees. According to Kerry M. Deets, president of the Chamber, the proposal is a welcome move as employers have been incurring huge expenses in shouldering 100 percent the medical insurance of nonresident workers.

CUC moves to avoid Tinian water crisis

Tinian will soon begin the process of contracting a private company to build a new well on the island as part of the efforts to avert potential serious water shortage in the next few years, according to utility officials. "It's not a crisis yet, but it will be if we don't do it now," said Gregorio Castro, deputy director of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation for Tinian. The new well—an alternative to Maui well which has been the island's main source of water for decades—will be bidded out starting July 2 to potential contractors.

June 18, 2001

Stay limit suspension nears

Suspension of the three-year stay limit law draws closer, after the Senate approved a compromise agreement borne out of months of discussion with the House of Representatives and members of the business community. The compromise bill now heads to Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio for approval. Once signed by the governor, the existing three-year stay limit law will not be implemented until 2004.

Visitor arrivals in record-low

Visitor arrivals to the Northern Marianas for the month of May hit as record-low since 2000, dipping by 8.93 percent from last year of the same period's 42,159 to 38,394 this year. This alarming development came even as the Commonwealth's Marianas Visitors Authority and the business community lined up a series of activities in connection with the celebration of May as CNMI Tourism Month.

Customs seize $400K of fake goods

The Customs Division's seaport branch has intercepted several boxes containing fake signature items from South Korea, which were reportedly intended for commercial sale in the local market. Customs officials said the value of confiscated items may reach up to $400,000 if sold at the price level of genuine products.

June 18, 2002

Landmark tourism accord inked

Two students from a Japan tourism school have signed up for a year-long internship program studying the CNMI's island-style hospitality under a partnership formed between the Northern Marianas College, Hyatt Regency-Saipan and the Trajal Hospitality and Tourism College. Trajal students Mie Tani and Yuka Kawahara will learn about the CNMI's tourism industry first hand as on-the-job trainees at the Hyatt under an internship agreement made official yesterday by NMC Interim President Dr. Barbara Moir, Hyatt General Manager Michael von Siebenthal and Trajal College Vice President for Administration Susumu Seino.

FAA commits to NMI airport security

The U.S. Department of Transportation signed an agreement with the Commonwealth Ports Authority, sealing its commitment to shoulder the costs of federalizing CNMI airports by year-end. The same agreement has been signed with airport operators across the United States and its insular areas.

FUNDRAISING DINNER
Members of the Big Beats band entertain the crowd during the CNMI Nurses Association's Fundraising dinner at the Hibiscus Hall of Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan Friday night.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

DISCOVERY CAMP
CNMI historian Don Farrell discusses lessons on local World War II history with 15 participants in the first summer Discovery Camp for high school students. Chulu beach on the northwest side of Tinian served as home base for the students as they explored the island participating in a wide range of activities.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MALLARDS IN THE WATER
Garapan Elementary School batch 2008 graduates frolic at the Pacific Islands Club pool after their graduation ceremony.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

SAIPAN SINGING BEE
"Pistang Pinoy" Singing bee champion Sheryll Sabino holds her trophy after winning the competition at the Garapan Central Park Sunday afternoon.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

BEACH CLEANUP
Division of Environmental Quality director Frank Rabauliman and his staff, along with Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Melvin Faisao and Historic Preservation Office director Pedro "Roy" Sablan and his staff, plus a volunteer from the DPH/Chest Clinic and other volunteers from around the island gather for a souvenir picture after a recent cleanup activity at the Old Man By the Sea.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONGRATULATIONS!
Congratulations to Martha Regis Mendiola, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at the Northern Marianas College, cum laude. Greetings come from Ate Elna and Angel Felice.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SHIPPING SCHEDULE

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Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD Kelang	ETD Fuzhou	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung
MELL SINGAPORE	010E	6/7 SAT	6/5 THU	5/26 MON	6/12 THU	5/27 TUE	5/31 SAT	6/13 FRI	6/9 MON	6/8 SUN	6/3 TUE	5/25 SUN	6/9 MON	6/13 FRI	6/14 SAT
STADT HAMBURG	018E	6/14 SAT	6/12 THU	6/2 MON	6/19 THU	6/3 TUE	6/7 SAT	6/20 FRI	6/16 MON	6/15 SUN	6/10 TUE	6/1 SUN	6/16 MON	6/20 FRI	6/21 SAT
MELL SENOKO	006E	6/21 SAT	6/19 THU	6/9 MON	6/26 THU	6/10 TUE	6/14 SAT	6/27 FRI	6/23 MON	6/22 SUN	6/17 TUE	6/8 SUN	6/23 MON	6/27 FRI	6/28 SAT
MELL SINGAPORE	011E	6/28 SAT	6/26 THU	6/16 MON	7/3 THU	6/17 TUE	6/21 SAT	7/4 FRI	6/30 MON	6/29 SUN	6/24 TUE	6/15 SUN	6/30 MON	7/4 FRI	7/5 SAT
STADT HAMBURG	019E	7/5 SAT	7/3 THU	6/23 MON	7/10 THU	6/24 TUE	6/28 SAT	7/11 FRI	7/7 MON	7/6 SUN	7/1 TUE	6/22 SUN	7/7 MON	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT
MELL SENOKO	007E	7/12 SAT	7/10 THU	6/30 MON	7/17 THU	7/1 TUE	7/5 SAT	7/18 FRI	7/14 MON	7/13 SUN	7/8 TUE	6/29 SUN	7/14 MON	7/25 FRI	7/19 SAT

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipn	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Kobe	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
MELL SINGAPORE	010E	6/20 FRI	6/21 SAT	6/21 SAT	6/24 TUE	6/25 WED	6/27 FRI	6/28 SAT	7/1 TUE	7/4 FRI	7/5 SAT	7/8 TUE	7/8 TUE	7/6 SUN	7/9 WED
STADT HAMBURG	018E	6/27 FRI	6/28 SAT	6/28 SAT	SKIP	7/2 WED	7/4 FRI	7/5 SAT	7/8 TUE	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT	7/17 THU	7/15 TUE	7/13 SUN	7/16 WED
MELL SENOKO	006E	7/4 FRI	7/5 SAT	7/5 SAT	7/8 TUE	7/9 WED	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT	7/15 TUE	7/18 FRI	7/19 SAT	7/24 THU	7/22 TUE	7/20 SUN	7/23 WED
MELL SINGAPORE	011E	7/11 FRI	7/12 SAT	7/12 SAT	SKIP	7/16 WED	7/18 FRI	7/19 SAT	7/22 TUE	7/25 FRI	7/26 SAT	7/31 THU	7/29 TUE	7/27 SUN	7/30 WED
STADT HAMBURG	019E	7/18 FRI	7/19 SAT	7/19 SAT	7/22 TUE	7/23 WED	7/25 FRI	7/26 SAT	7/26 SAT	8/1 FRI	8/2 SAT	8/7 THU	8/5 TUE	8/3 SUN	8/6 WED
MELL SENOKO	007E	7/25 FRI	7/26 SAT	7/26 SAT	SKIP	7/30 WED	8/1 FRI	8/2 SAT	8/5 TUE	8/8 FRI	8/9 SAT	8/14 THU	8/12 TUE	8/10 SUN	8/13 WED

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Aggressive action at home

A 29-member independent task force of the Council on Foreign Relations released a report Friday that adds another authoritative voice to the clamor for U.S. leadership on climate change. Co-chaired by former New York Gov. George E. Pataki, R, and former Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack, D,the bipartisan document makes an argument that has fallen on deaf ears at the White House. "As the United States takes increasingly aggressive action at home," the authors correctly note, "it will be in a stronger position to ask more of others."

"Confronting Climate Change: A Strategy for U.S. Foreign Policy" endorses a reduction in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions between 60 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 through a cap-and-trade system. This puts it in line with the 60 percent goal of the Climate Security Act that failed in the Senate last week and with the 50 to 85 percent target of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The task force insists that the successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol include developing nations, such as China and India, and it calls on the United States not to sign an international climate agreement without them. And if the United States doesn't sign, the task force urges it, the European Union and others to create a smaller emissions trading pact that could link up with another global pact later.

The report advocates the formation of the "Partnership for Climate Cooperation." Think of it as a nod to the Major Economies Meetings convened by President Bush over the past year with the world's largest carbon-dioxide-emitting nations. But the task force makes explicit that the partnership "would be rooted in an aggressive effort to cut U.S. emissions and would focus on practical actions and implementation of specific strategies." This is a far cry from the "aspirational goals" that have been the sorry hallmark of Mr. Bush's endeavor.

Because climate change will have a major impact on poor countries and could have national security implications for the United States, the task force urged that climate considerations be incorporated into foreign aid. It also called on developed nations to give this assistance more strategically as a way of building political pressure on wealthier developing countries to take action to combat global warming.

None of these recommendations will become reality as long as the United States remains on the sidelines. As the task force noted, a predicate for action is for leaders in Washington to "honestly communicate the challenges and opportunities involved in tackling climate change." Judging from the demise of the Climate Security Act in the Senate earlier this month, Washington isn't quite there yet.

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What we owe our young

By SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR and JAMES R. JONES
Special to *The Washington Post*

Sandra Day O'Connor served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court from 1981 to 2006. James R. Jones was ambassador to Mexico from 1993 to 1997. They are honorary co-chairs of the Youth Entitlement Summit.

Idealistic young voters have turned out in record numbers this year—and not a moment too soon. How our next president represents the interests of young Americans will define not only his legacy but that of an entire generation of political leaders.

The standard Washington model for rewarding influential constituencies is an agenda of targeted spending, tax breaks or regulatory measures. Traditional patronage, however, will not suffice when it comes to preparing for the approaching tsunami of retirement and health-care spending.

The Government Accountability Office and many, many others have documented the magnitude of the Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid bills that will come due over the next several decades. Even if every dollar of wealth of every millionaire in the United States were magically diverted to pay these costs, 80 percent of the unfunded liabilities forecast for these three programs would remain on the books.

Social Security Advisory Board Chairman Sylvester J. Schieber has found that honoring today's promises to tomorrow's retirees could put the living standards of working households on a path of decline by the mid-2020s, according to a groundbreaking study in the Milken Institute Review. Under this scenario, today's high school students might never experience a year in the workforce when their tax rates would not rise.

Far more troubling outcomes are at least as plausible. Rather than raise taxes or modify benefits, our leaders could continue to follow the path of least resistance, shifting even greater burdens onto the young and endangering the living standards of everyone else in the process. Brookings Institution senior scholar Isabel Sawhill, writing in this month's Democracy Journal, warns of "realistic" budget deficits so large that by 2017, annual interest payments on the national debt would total $500 billion—three times the amount of annual war spending in Iraq.

Among the likely casualties of such recklessness would be the very financial markets whose stability underpins the soundness of our private retirement system. And given the growing interdependence of the developed and developing worlds, and the advancing fiscal fragility of our aging allies in Asia and Europe, an American financial crisis could produce aftershocks that would rock the foundations of global prosperity.

Our government was founded on the principle that the legitimacy of law derives from the consent of the governed. Today's youths and future generations have not been consulted in the writing of our current social contract. Yet they soon may face financial burdens that most voters would find intolerable.

As we approach this vast expansion of spending, precipitated by a combination of aging baby boomers and abnormally high health costs, it is time to consult our young. That is exactly what we hope to do through the Youth Entitlement Summit taking place Monday and Tuesday on Capitol Hill.

The youth activists assembling for this meeting know that although 41 percent of Americans are younger than 30, their political clout is inherently limited. Despite turning out in record numbers this year, voters ages 18 to 29 have accounted for only 13 percent of the presidential primary electorate. In the future, demographics will relegate youths to an ever-shrinking electoral minority.

Far from being a classic struggle of special interests, the representation of younger and future generations depends on the informed selflessness of their elders. Older generations must allow Congress to fix Social Security. Much can be achieved through practical changes that need not affect those in or near retirement.

The larger and more urgent task is health reform. In the interests of effective cost control, Medicare beneficiaries in particular must be prepared to embrace sensible limits on the way their health care is provided. Halting runaway medical inflation represents a potential victory for all generations.

Our country must recognize that an overreliance on taxation poses real economic risks. We cannot grow our way out of this budget challenge. Yet its magnitude is such that we cannot hope to meet it without creating new wealth.

The impressive involvement of young Americans in this presidential election provides a golden opportunity for our next president to face this dilemma—and to cast aside political orthodoxy in fashioning a bipartisan agenda of reform. Anything less risks undermining the noble experiment that began 232 years ago.

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Boom times and the trade school connection

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT

Creating economic success for the CNMI

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

Boom times for the CNMI!

Northern Mariana Islands—The Pacific islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota are experiencing an economic resurgence. New development, home improvements, an influx of business investment, an increase in tourism, immigration, and more, are making the CNMI the new hot spot in business opportunity. Taking the lead in creating and profiting from these boom time opportunities are members of the local community, who, unlike their counterparts in other resource-rich lands, have seized control of…. [to be continued….]

A few years from now, we may, in fact, be able to read just such a headline and byline in the local papers. And, when we look back, we might be able to point to July 1, 2008 as a pivotal date in the story. That's the day that the Marianas Trades Institute will launch on a mission to create skilled tradesmen and business owners in the CNMI.

Teaching saleable skills to local residents is, of course, not a new idea. What IS new this time around are a unique set of market conditions, federalization, increasing minimum wage, and perhaps most importantly to its success, the team of people behind the idea. It's the right idea at just the right time. I had a chance to sit with team coordinator, Tony Pellegrino, and ask a few questions.

So why a Trade School?

Tony: Let me ask you a question. How would you like to set your own salary and income? How would you like to get away from working at minimum wage? How would you like to be an employer, and not an employee?

Whatever the economy, there's a need for skilled tradesmen and women. Even now, there's a need for qualified trades people. I'd like to see people move away from the minimum wage mentality. I'd like to see us improve the local labor pool. Everyone knows that things are changing here in the CNMI. Right now, many of the trades are filled by non-resident workers. But, this is work that we, as local residents have to do. If all the non-residents return to their homelands, we'll be left in a dire situation.

I was watching a show on TLC. Six guys bought a house, stripped it, remodeled it, sold it, and made a good profit. Six guys! And all they used were their hand tools. You don't need 30-40 people working on a house. Five or six guys with the right skills can do the same job in less time. With the right training, we can upgrade the quality of the workmanship here on Saipan, train people on the right tools, give them the latest technology to make money easier and faster.

Can I really make money as a carpenter, plumber or electrician?

Tony: The trades industry is a very lucrative industry. Most people don't realize that. We think it's just manual labor with low wages. It's not. If you get a good, motivated person, they can turn over a good buck. Here on Saipan, all you need is a pickup truck and your tools. That truck over there [points to a beat-up pickup] could be making someone $30,000 a year. You go out, knock on doors and offer your services. People always need things fixed or built. And, once you get what's called a "journeyman's license" to practice your trade, you can work here, on Guam, Hawaii or the U.S. mainland at whatever pay scale the market can afford. [If you want to see what carpenters and other professions earn across the US, check out www.salary.com]

Why should I go to a trade school to learn to be a plumber, or a carpenter or an electrician? Can't my uncle, the carpenter, teach me what I need to know?

Tony: You don't have to go to school to learn a trade. However, most professional tradesmen focus on a particular specialty. Your uncle might be a "rough carpenter" [doing preliminary, large scale framing, formwork or roofing], so if you work with him, you may never get to learn "joisting" [putting in floor joists], "finishing" [cabinets, furniture, fine woodwork], or "trimming" [door and window casings, mantels, ornamental work]. So, if you apprentice yourself with your uncle, it might take you 5 -10 years to learn all the different aspects of the trade. However, when you go to a trade school, you can shorten the length of time considerably. You get trained using the latest tools, you analyze all the different aspects of the profession, and eventually, you can demand a higher salary.

What trade skills will you be teaching at MTI?

Tony: Right now, we'll be starting with four: Electrical Tradesman, Painting Tradesman, Carpentry Tradesman and Plumber. As we grow, we'll increase the number of courses.

Who are some of your instructors? Did you have to pull them in from off island?

Tony: No, they're all right here on Saipan. You see, we've got the talent and the expertise right here, my friend. I didn't pull them from off island, I pulled them from out of retirement! George Sablan, for example, is the executive director of the school. He has over 20 years of experience in carpentry. Frank Flores is a certified journeyman. We've got nine instructors so far.

Who else is involved or supporting the school and its mission?

Tony: We've got the cooperation of the U.S. Workforce Investment Agency (Edith Guerrero), the Department of Labor (Cinta Kaipat). We're working with the food stamp program to find potential students, and we've applied to SHEFA (Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance) program for scholarships to help our students meet their tuition expenses.

Say I sign up to the trade school, start my classes in July. When can I start making money?

Tony: It's not an overnight process, but the best thing about the program is that you first become an apprentice, working alongside someone who is in the trade. So you earn while you learn. You become a paid apprentice—an assistant—while you go to school, and as you develop the skills to become licensed.

Classes are held two days a week for 2½ hours each day. So that's five hours each week.

MARIANAS Trades Institute

The Core Curriculum is basically a 72.5 hour course. By attending class 5 hours per week it will take 14.5 weeks or about 3.5 months.

So, let's take a look at the painting program as an example. The Painting Program has four levels. Level One is 152.5 hours (includes 72.5 hours of Core) and will take about 30.5 weeks to complete. Level Two is 145 hours and will take 29 weeks. Level three is 152.5 hours and will take about 30 weeks. Level four is 152.5 hours and will take about 30 weeks.

The Total Time Required for entire course, therefore, is 602.5 hours (120.5 weeks) or about 30 months. That's the time required until you can take the test to qualify as a journeyman. However, you'll be working all that time earning a salary.

On average, it typically takes from 2-2 ½ years to be fully certified as a journeyman, and, as we add more classes, instructors and courses, that could even be shorter.

And once I finish the class time, and put in the necessary apprenticeship time, what's next? Do you actually provide me my journeyman license?

Tony: Once you complete the courses and training, there's both a written and a practical test. The certifying agency is the Guam Contractor's Association. The US mainland parent organization is the National Center for Construction and Education Research. They are the ones who send you your card and your wall certificate.

So what do I need to get started?

Tony: The first requirement is that you have a job. If you don't have a job, then the first thing we do is help you find one. Even if it's not one in your trade, we want you to have steady employment. Why? We expect you to pay for your tuition, and we want to develop a work ethic and encourage you to invest in yourself.

[No prior qualifications are required to enroll such as high school diploma or age. The main requisite is a strong desire to learn a skilled trade. Students will pay a modest tuition and book fee for each segment of the training.]

Does the school place me once I've finished the training?

Tony: We will let businesses across the CNMI and Guam know who our students are from the moment they enroll. Let me tell you what Bert, the director of the school in Guam that we're modeling, told me. He has a student there, a 31-year old man, with six children, who couldn't get a job. Bert got him a job making $11/hour plus a company car within 2-3 months. Bert's told me he's constantly getting calls from contractors asking for students to apprentice. "I can't supply enough students, Tony!" he's told me.

[When students are ready to graduate, the institute will encourage them to form their own companies as independent contractors. By doing this they will be owners of their own companies able to service the community as skilled and respected tradesmen. Or they may prefer to work for a construction company as skilled tradespersons.]

Any final words?

Tony: The people who say they don't see opportunity here on Saipan are just not looking. Do you know that housing complex behind the Garapan Elementary School? Do you realize the gold mine that's there!? That is prime property. The location is prime. There are dozens of homes there –all stripped clean—that nobody is looking at. The site is beautiful.

How can you let millions of dollars lie dormant slowly decaying and turning into junk? If I were 30 years younger, I would find a way to convert it into an asset rather than a blight on the community. I would take my skilled painters, plumbers, electricians and carpenters, head over to HUD, and see how we could take them over and make a buck. We could do just what those six guys did on the TLC program. We could renovate, rebuild, and turn our garbage into gold! They could be used as rental properties, converted to living quarters, cottages for tourists, something. I see these obvious opportunities, and I ask why aren't we jumping on them?

How do we contact you to get started?

Tony: If you know anyone, your son or daughter or friends who are interested and motivated, you can contact George Sablan at 285-7410, or me at 287-8310. We'll give you all the information you need.

Walt: It's a unique gift you have, Tony, to be able to recognize opportunities and turn them into profitable businesses. Even though you're not one of the instructors, what I'm excited about is that the lucky few who are able to get on board now at the start of MTI's story will be fortunate to work closer with you than others who come later. I'm excited that the passion and insights you bring to this venture as well as your other businesses, will rub off on us.

Tony: Thanks, but it's really about the community's success. We've got what it takes right here in our community. We can do it. We have to do it. We have to invest in ourselves. When you invest in yourself, you get something that no one can take from you. You get control of your destiny, your land, your community and your children's future.

■ ■ ■

I ended last week's column with the words "you have to start somewhere!" That start needs to happen in many places at once. It could start in community involvement, small business startups, health reform, and any number of areas, as people identify the needs, and fill them. If Saipan, Tinian and Rota are to experience the resurgence alluded to in my opening paragraph, there will be a need for competent trades people to build new homes, repair the existing ones. It's one of the basic needs (food, clothing and shelter) that every nation's population requires.

Note: For more tips on acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com. Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲87° ▼79	▲88° ▼78°

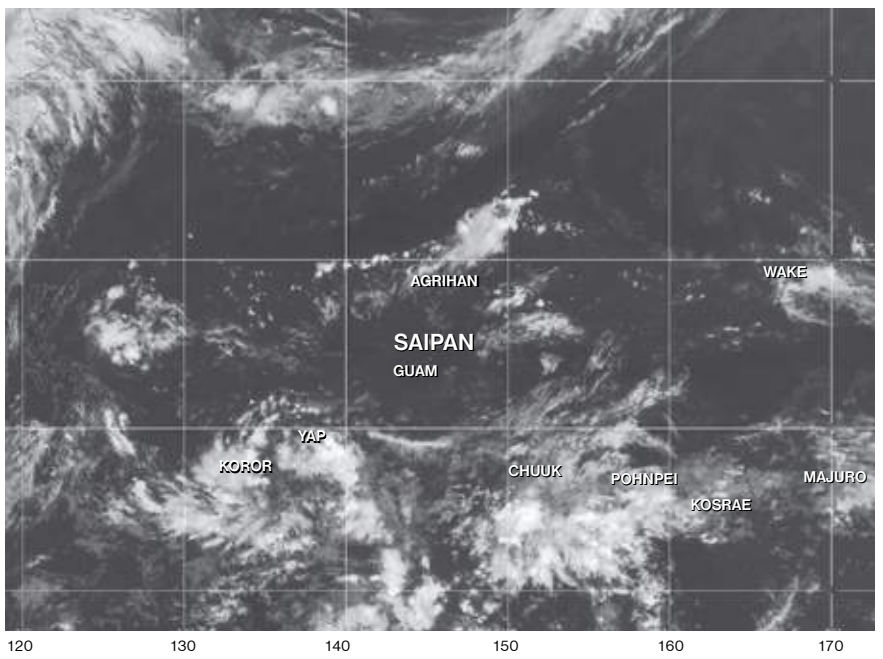
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	▲87	▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼78
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼76
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼73
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼77
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲60	▼44
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲79	▼59
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼81
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲82	▼75
London	Showers	▲68	▼56
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲86	▼64
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	▲93	▼81
Melbourne	Rain	▲63	▼50
Miami	Thundershowers	▲86	▼74
New York	Thundershowers	▲73	▼58
Osaka	Rain	▲74	▼67
Paris	Cloudy	▲72	▼56
Pusan	Showers	▲77	▼66
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲85	▼61
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲71	▼44
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲74	▼52
Seoul	Rain	▲73	▼63
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲77	▼64
Washington, DC	Thundershowers	▲77	▼60

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough extends southeast from 8N130E through a weak circulation centered near Koror to EQ145E. Scattered to numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the trough and circulation are found across Palau and Yap from 3N to 9N between 130E and 141E. Trade-wind convergence south of Chuuk is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Chuuk and Pohnpei from 1N to 7N between 149E and 161E. Trade-wind convergence associated with a surface trough extending northeast from EQ163E to 7N168E is producing scattered showers in the Marshall Islands from 5N to 9N between 169E and 175E. An upper-level trough extends from a tutt cell east of Guam near 14N150E through 17N160E and 17N175E to 23N180. Divergence aloft associated with the trough is enhancing showers east of Wake Island between 17N and 23N. Another area of enhanced shower activity is north of the Marianas within 90 miles of 21N148E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:38AM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
6:05AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
1:49PM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
9:10PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:47AM	6:49 PM
Thursday	5:47AM	6:49 PM
Friday	5:47AM	6:49 PM
Saturday	5:47AM	6:50 PM
Sunday	5:48AM	6:50 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:32PM	4:59AM
Thursday	7:23PM	5:50AM
Friday	8:11PM	6:43AM
Saturday	8:55PM	7:37AM
Sunday	9:37PM	8:29AM

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  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

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- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:45pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily

Saipan-Manila

CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Guam-Hongkong

CO 909	6:40pm	9:25pm	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:55pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily via Nagoya

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily

Manila-Saipan

CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7

Manila-Guam

CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Hongkong-Guam

CO 910	10:35pm	5:15am+1	1,5

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

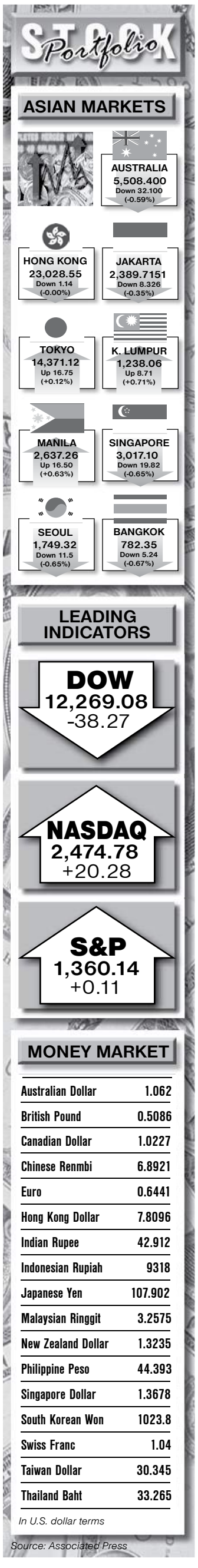
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Business



Oil hits new record, then reverses

NEW YORK (AP)—Crude oil futures swung wildly on Monday, rising to a record and then tumbling as investors wrestled with whether they should put stock in Saudi Arabia's promise to boost production. Retail gas prices rose to a record $4.08 a gallon.

Light, sweet crude for July delivery fell 25 cents to settle at $134.61 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange after earlier soaring to a trading record of $139.89. Earlier, they dropped as low as $132.84.

With little in the way of news to explain oil's turnabout, analysts pointed to Saudi Arabia's weekend decision to boost production and to Tuesday's expiration of crude options, which are agreements to buy or sell futures at higher or lower prices.

Trading is often volatile in the days immediately preceding options expiration. "That could be the cause of some of the volatility today," said James Cordier, president of Tampa, Fla.-based trading firms Liberty Trading Group and OptionSellers.com.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer, told U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon over the weekend that it would boost oil output by 200,000 barrels a day, or by 2 percent, from June to July. In May, the kingdom raised production by 300,000 barrels a day.

A sense that the Saudis may be getting serious about boosting output could be growing among some investors. Still, many analysts believe the boost in Saudi output is too little to make much difference.

"Saudi Arabia's proposed output addition will only go some way in offsetting the significant output losses in other OPEC nations like Nigeria," said Barclays Capital analyst Kevin Norrish in a research note.

Cordier said Saudi Arabia has "to increase by north of 1 million barrels per day" to have an impact on prices, "and the market doesn't think they have it."

According to the International Energy Agency, OPEC spare capacity fell below 2 million barrels a day in May for the first time since 2006. The majority of that—about 1.45 million barrels a day—was in Saudi Arabia.

Earlier Monday, prices rose as the dollar fell against the euro. Many investors buy commodities such as oil as a hedge against inflation when the dollar falls. Also, a weaker dollar makes oil less expensive to investors dealing in other currencies. Many analysts believe the dollar's protracted decline is a major factor behind oil's doubling in price over the past year.

Investors were also mulling the effects of an overnight fire at a StatoilHydro ASA drilling rig in the North Sea, which could affect as much as 150,000 barrels of daily oil production, said Addison Armstrong, director of market research at Tradition Energy in Stamford, Conn., in a research note.

Stocks trade mixed as oil retreats

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street started the week with a mixed finish on Monday as investors weighed volatility in oil prices and new hope for the financial sector after Lehman Brothers posted results.

Stocks spent much of the session mostly lower after a fresh record for crude oil and a decline in regional manufacturing activity touched off concerns about the ability of the economy to push ahead.

But more buyers turned out following an afternoon retreat in oil. And financials were among the biggest gainers after Lehman offered more insights into its financial well-being.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 38.27, or 0.31 percent, to 12,269.08 after being down more than 95 points early in the session.

Broader stock indicators were mixed. The Standard & Poor's 500 index added 0.11, or 0.01 percent, to 1,360.14. The Nasdaq composite index, which contains many technology names, rose 20.28, or 0.83 percent, to 2,474.78.

AP

In this May 13, 2008 file photo, Honda's new fuel cell vehicle "FCX Clarity" is presented to the media in Tokyo.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Lehman shares rebound as Fuld pledges to execute

NEW YORK (AP)—Lehman Brothers Chief Executive Richard Fuld on Monday took the blame for the company's staggering second-quarter loss, and said the investment bank was too slow in reacting to the credit crisis. "This is my responsibility," Fuld declared in his first comments since the bank forecast last week it lost nearly $3 billion from bad bets in mortgage-backed securities and other risky investments. As the longest serving CEO left on Wall Street, his mission now is clearly to restore confidence to the firm's tarnished image. "We made active decisions to deploy our capital, some of which in hindsight were poor choices because we really didn't act quickly enough to the eroding environment," Fuld, sounding agitated on a conference call with analysts.

McClatchy slashes 1,400 jobs in cost-cutting drive

NEW YORK (AP)—McClatchy Co., the No. 3 newspaper company in the country, said Monday it is slashing 1,400 jobs in the latest effort to cut costs amid rapidly dwindling advertising revenues. The cuts represent about 10 percent of the company's work force. McClatchy, which publishes 30 daily newspapers including The Miami Herald and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, also reported a 15.4 percent decline in advertising revenues in the first five months of the year on Monday. The cuts at McClatchy come amid a broad retrenchment in the U.S. newspaper industry as the economic downturn combined with competition for classified advertising from online rivals like Craigslist has resulted in a steep slump in advertising revenues.

Satellite radio merger at Sirius crossroad

WASHINGTON (AP)—The chairman of the Federal Communications Commission says he is satisfied the $3.8 billion merger of the nation's only two satellite radio companies is in the public's interest, but that's no guarantee the deal will win final approval. Two of the other four commissioners are ardent foes of allowing big media companies to get bigger and a third has been sympathetic to the broadcast industry, which opposes the satellite radio deal. FCC chairman Kevin Martin said Sunday he will recommend that Sirius Satellite Radio Inc.'s buyout of rival XM Satellite Radio Holdings Inc. be approved by the five-member commission.

Honda rolls out new zero-emission car

TAKANEZAWA, Japan (AP)—Honda's new zero-emission, hydrogen fuel cell car rolled off a Japanese production line Monday and is headed to Southern California, where Hollywood is already abuzz over the latest splash in green motoring.

The FCX Clarity, which runs on hydrogen and electricity, emits only water and none of the noxious fumes believed to induce global warming. It is also two times more energy efficient than a gas-electric hybrid and three times that of a standard gasoline-powered car, the company says.

Japan's third biggest automaker expects to lease out a "few dozen" units this year and about 200 units within three years. In California, a three-year lease will run $600 a month, which includes maintenance and collision coverage.

Among the first customers are actress Jamie Lee Curtis and filmmaker husband Christopher Guest, actress Laura Harris, film producer Ron Yerxa, as well as businessmen Jon Spallino and Jim Salomon.

"It's so smooth," said Harris, who played villainness Marie Warner on the hit TV show "24" and was flown over by Honda for the ceremony. "It's like a future machine, but it's not."

The FCX Clarity is an improvement of its previous-generation fuel cell vehicle, the FCX, introduced in 2005.

A breakthrough in the design of the fuel cell stack, which is the unit that powers the car's motor, allowed engineers to lighten the body, expand the interior and increase efficiency, Honda said.

Lenders pledge speedy response on loan help

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mortgage companies, facing criticism that they aren't doing enough to stem the housing crisis, are pledging to let troubled borrowers know whether they're approved for help within 45 days of receiving a homeowner's application.

The promise is expected to be announced Tuesday by the Hope Now alliance, a Bush administration-backed industry group, as part of a new set of guidelines for mortgage companies participating in the effort. The Associated Press obtained a copy of the guidelines.

The agreement is designed to clarify the mortgage assistance process for borrowers and the industry alike, but is not legally binding.

It also tries to alleviate a major stumbling block: the reluctance of companies that hold second mortgages, such as home equity loans, to agree to such modifications. Such requests should be approved, the agreement says, unless the holder of the second mortgage would be put in a worse financial position.

Consumer groups, however, say Hope Now's efforts will never match the growth in foreclosures around the country, and are pushing for a new $300 billion program to allow the government to back new loans for struggling homeowners.

"There isn't a serious level of modification going on because the program is voluntary," said John Taylor, president of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, a consumer group in Washington, who described the newest announcement as "baby steps."

Nation

Dozens of gay couples wed in Calif.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Dozens of gay couples were married Monday night after California became the second state to allow same-sex nuptials, offering a preview of the euphoria and anger to come as gay couples from across the nation head west to wed.

At least five county clerks around the state extended their hours to honor specific couples or to mark the historic occasion, and many couples exchanged vows on the spot. The May 15 California Supreme Court order overturning bans on same-sex marriage became final at 5:01 p.m.

"I never thought I'd see this," Michael Groark, 61, said at a San Francisco sports bar, watching on television as Mayor Gavin Newsom officiated the first same-sex wedding in the city.

The big rush to the altar was expected Tuesday, when most counties planned to start issuing marriage licenses to gay couples. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of couples nationwide are expected to seize the opportunity to make their unions official in the eyes of the law.

Newsom, who helped launch the series of lawsuits that led the court to strike down California's one-man-one-woman marriage laws, presided at the wedding of Del Martin, 87, and Phyllis Lyon, 83.

Newsom picked the couple for the only ceremony Monday in City Hall to recognize their 55-year relationship and their status as pioneers of the gay rights movement. More than 650 same-sex couples have made appointments to get marriage licenses in San Francisco before the end of the month.

Martin sat in her wheelchair during the brief ceremony in the mayor's office, which was open to a few elected officials, friends, relatives and reporters. After Newsom pronounced her and Lyon "spouses for life," the couple kissed, drawing huge applause.

As a printer churned out a license with spaces for "Party A" and "Party B" where "bride" and "groom" used to be, Newsom called officiating the wedding "this extraordinary and humbling gift."

When the pair emerged from the mayor's chamber, a crowd of well-wishers showered them with rose petals and ate complimentary wedding cake.

"When anyone is on the outside looking in, to be finally allowed in is a profound feeling," said Elizabeth Williams, 45, who plans to marry her partner of 16 years later this year.

The celebrations were tempered by the reality that in a few months, Californians will go to the ballot box to vote on an initiative that would overturn the high court ruling and once again ban gay marriage.

AP

Surrounded by photographers, Robin Tyler, left, and Diane Olson hug after their same-sex wedding on the steps of Beverly Hills Courthouse, Monday, June 16, 2008, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Gore endorses Obama and promises to help him

FLINT, Mich. (AP)—Al Gore announced his endorsement of Barack Obama Monday and promised to help the Democrat achieve what eluded him—the presidency. In a letter to be e-mailed to Obama supporters, the former vice president and Nobel Prize winner wrote, "From now through Election Day, I intend to do whatever I can to make sure he is elected president of the United States."

Gore

In 2000, Gore won the popular vote but lost the disputed 2000 election to George W. Bush, who captured Florida and its electoral votes after a divided Supreme Court ended the recount. Since then, Gore has made combatting global warming his signature issue, and has been recognized worldwide for his effort—from an Academy Award for a documentary for his effort to the Nobel prize.

Gore is one of the most popular figures in the Democratic Party, but he maintained a low profile in the primary campaign. He's planning to appear with Obama at a rally in Detroit Monday night.

It's the second time that Obama has rolled out a major endorsement in Michigan, a state he did not campaign in during the primary because its election violated the party rules. Obama is counting on a win in Michigan in November, but brought Gore and 2004 vice presidential nominee John Edwards to help validate him among Democrats in the state after skipping their primary.

"It means a lot, obviously," Obama said of Gore's support, as he greeted workers outside the General Motors Flint Engine South plant. "He's somebody who is a visionary, not just for the party, but for the country."

Gore also asked for donations to help fund Obama's effort—the first time he's asked members of his Web site AlGore.com to contribute to a political campaign.

"Over the past 18 months, Barack Obama has united a movement. He knows change does not come from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue or Capitol Hill. It begins when people stand up and take action," Gore wrote. "With the help of millions of supporters like you, Barack Obama will bring the change we so desperately need in order to solve our country's most pressing problems."

Feds: Levees could overflow if sandbags fail

WASHINGTON (AP)—The federal government predicts that 27 levees could potentially overflow along the Mississippi River if the weather forecast is on the mark and a massive sandbagging effort fails to raise the level of the levees, according to a map obtained Monday by The Associated Press.

Officials are placing millions of sandbags on top of the levees along the river in Illinois, Iowa and Missouri to prevent overflowing. There is no way to predict whether these levees will break, said Ron Fournier, a spokesman with the Army Corps of Engineers in Iowa. "That's a crystal ball that nobody has," he told the AP.

The levees in New Orleans broke during Hurricane Katrina, causing catastrophic flooding.

Record-breaking storms and flooding across six states this month continue to force thousands of people to evacuate and seek shelter. Since June 6, there have been 22 deaths, 85 injuries and more than 26,000 power outages because of the storms and flooding, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The disasters are not as catastrophic as 2005's Hurricane Katrina, when at least 1,600 people were killed.

The Army Corps of Engineers looks at the latest weather forecasts and creates "battle maps" for levee engineers that show how many levees could overflow without what Fournier calls a "big flood fight effort." The flood fight entails placing millions of sandbags on top of the levees to make them higher.

Astronomers find 'super Earths' circling a star

WASHINGTON (AP)—European astronomers have found a trio of "super-Earths" closely circling a star that astronomers once figured had nothing orbiting it, demonstrating that planets keep popping up in unexpected places.

Monday's announcement is the first time three planets close to Earth's size were found orbiting a single star, said Swiss astronomer Didier Queloz. He was part of the Swiss-French team using the European Southern Observatory's La Silla Observatory in the desert in Chile.

The mass of the smallest of these super-Earths is about four times the size of Earth. That may seem like a lot, but they are quite a bit closer in size and likely composition to Earth than our solar system's giants—Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. They are much too hot to support life, Queloz said.

Scientists are more interested in the broader implications of the finding: The universe is teeming with far more planets than thought.

Using a new tool to study more than 100 stars once thought to be devoid of planets, the Swiss-French team found that about one-third had planets that are only slightly bigger than Earth.

ACROSS THE NATION

No safety briefing for crew in fatal crash

FALLON, Nev. (AP)—The Navy helicopter crew killed in a crash after striking a power line during training last year skipped a safety briefing before the flight, according to a newspaper report. An unnamed commanding officer waived the briefing prior to the May 2007 crash near Naval Air Station Fallon, according to Monday's Navy Times, which cites a Navy investigative report. The helicopter, an SH-60F Seahawk, struck power lines on a night training mission on May 7, then flipped over, crashed and burst into flames. All five crew members were killed. A second helicopter, flying behind the downed helicopter, was not damaged and none of its crew members injured.

Police in NC may have been warned before killing

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Police may have ignored a warning years ago that a woman with five dead spouses was trying to hire a hit man to kill one of the men, investigators in North Carolina said Monday. Authorities charged 76-year-old Betty Neumar last month with one count of solicitation of murder in the July 1986 death of Harold Gentry. Gentry's brother had begged investigators for two decades to take another look at the case. Stanly County sheriff's investigators believe Neumar tried to hire several people to kill Gentry. Lead detective Scott Williams said Monday his office is looking into the possibility that one of those would-be hit men went to authorities before Gentry's death, but no one took him seriously.

NC couple accused of tying son to tree charged

TARBORO, N.C. (AP)—A couple accused of killing their 13-year-old son by tying him to a tree for two nights for punishment appeared in a North Carolina courtroom Monday to face charges of murder and felony child abuse. Attorneys appeared Monday with Brice Brian McMillan, 41, and his wife Sandra Elizabeth McMillan, 36, of Macclesfield. The county sheriff's office has said Brice McMillan told a deputy the teen was being disobedient and was forced to sleep outside last Tuesday while tied to a tree. The teen was released Wednesday morning, but again tied up that night for bad behavior.

Baby's bloody pajamas shown at double-murder trial

WOBURN, Mass. (AP)—Jurors in the trial of a British man accused of killing his wife and 9-month-old daughter were shown the baby's undershirt and polka-dot pajamas caked with dried blood Monday—a sight that drew gasps in the courtroom. State police chemist Deanna Dygan testified that she determined that the gunshot to the chest that killed Lillian Rose Entwistle was a "contact shot," with the gun pressed directly against the baby. Neil Entwistle, 29, has pleaded not guilty to murder in the January 2006 killings of his daughter and his 27-year-old wife, Rachel.

Woman pleads not guilty in Internet suicide case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Missouri woman pleaded not guilty in Los Angeles federal court Monday to charges in an Internet hoax blamed for a 13-year-old girl's suicide. Lori Drew, 49, stood quietly beside her attorney Monday. Drew, of suburban St. Louis, Mo., is accused of helping to create a MySpace account that appeared to belong to a 16-year-old boy named Josh Evans. The boy did not exist. Drew's daughter had been a friend of 13-year-old neighbor Megan Meier and the fake account was used to send cruel messages to the girl, including one stating the world would be better off without her. Megan hanged herself in 2006. Drew has denied creating the account or sending messages to Meier.

Asia

1.27M homeless from China flood

FOSHAN, China (AP)—Weeks of rain pushed rivers over their banks in southern China, displacing more than 1.27 million people and forcing some to huddle on rooftops Monday as the region braced for more downpours.

China's state-run media say the flooding has killed 169 people in 20 provinces and the western region of Xinjiang, collapsed tens of thousands of homes, damaged crops across more than 2.12 million acres and causing more than an estimated $1.5 billion in economic losses.

The China Daily newspaper and Xinhua News Agency reported the figure Tuesday as forecasters warned that heavy rain in the forecast for the next couple days could bring more floods.

Banana trees were almost swallowed up by the muddy chocolate brown waters of the Xijiang River that overflowed its banks in Foshan, a city in prosperous Guangdong province. Farmers ditched their plows and waded into the neck-high waters with nets to catch fish.

The Beijiang River, which converges with the Xijiang in Foshan, swallowed a neighborhood that had been home to about 100 people.

AP

In this photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, local people row boats in flooded Daoshui Town of Wuzhou City, southwest China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Monday, June 16, 2008.

"The water came in fast. It started rising yesterday morning, and by noon our homes were swamped," said a man who gave his name as Mr. Huang, standing on a dike staring at his inundated home across the Beijiang river.

Residents crossed back and forth in wooden skiffs between the orange-tiled buildings.

"We're living on the second floor of the tallest building in our neighborhood," Huang said, pointing to a tall building. "We had to do the same thing during the flood in 2005, which was much worse than this one.

"The government ignored us then and it's ignoring us now," he said.

There were no signs in the area of large encampments of displaced people. Residents in multi-floor buildings appeared to have moved to higher floors, including on rooftops under tarpaulins.

Taliban take over villages near Kandahar

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—Hundreds of Taliban fighters invaded villages just outside Afghanistan's second-largest city Monday, forcing NATO and Afghan troops to rush in while frightened residents fled.

The Taliban assault on the outskirts of Kandahar is the latest display of prowess by the militants despite a record number of U.S. and NATO troops in the country.

The push into the Arghandab district—a lush region filled with grape and pomegranate groves that the Soviet army could never conquer—comes three days after a Taliban attack on Kandahar's prison that freed 400 insurgent fighters.

Those fighters, NATO conceded Monday, appear to be massing on the doorstep of the Taliban's former power base. The city of Kandahar lies only 10 miles to the southeast.

The sophisticated and successful jailbreak, followed by the movement into Arghandab, is the latest evidence of the Taliban's growing strength. The U.S. and NATO have pleaded for more troops in the last year and now have 65,000 in the country. But the militants are still finding successes the international alliance can't counter.

"Three days ago, inside of a 30-minute operation, the Taliban freed hundreds of prisoners, and NATO, the Canadians, the Americans, didn't do anything," said Mohammad Asif, 30, of Kandahar. "Now more than 500 Taliban are living in Arghandab. They are occupying the region."

Mohammad Farooq, the government leader in Arghandab, said about 500 Taliban fighters moved into his district and took over several villages. He said families were fleeing even as Canadian, U.S. and Afghan forces were moving in.

A large river bisects Arghandab's fertile lands. The east side, closest to Kandahar, is controlled by NATO and Afghan troops, Farooq said. The area to the river's west is now controlled by the Taliban.

Japan quake toll rises to 10

KURIHARA, Japan (AP)—Soldiers pulled the body of a 58-year-old man Monday from a hot spring inn knocked down by a landslide in northern Japan, bringing the death toll in a weekend earthquake to 10.

Authorities said 12 people were still missing from Saturday's 7.2-magnitude quake, which tore across the rural area, triggering a series of deadly landslides that barreled into homes and swept away roads.

Hope of finding more survivors dimmed Monday. Dozens of soldiers and other rescue workers surrounded the remains of the resort inn, which had been inundated with a deluge of mud, rocks and trees.

The man discovered on Monday was the fourth body salvaged from the inn. Three more victims—presumably dead—were believed buried in the wreckage.

"We are doing our best to find the three, but it has been difficult to carry out operations with all the mud in the area," said police spokesman Naoshi Tokunaga.

The more than 1,000 rescue workers and disaster officials have joined the search, their efforts aided by a spell of dry weather. The work, however, has been hindered by heavy road damage caused by landslides.

Several major points of access to the hardest-hit spots were virtually unreachable by ground, with tons of debris covering them. Soldiers using backhoes were trying to dig their way to the hot spring area, but had to start 5 miles away.

Nine other people were missing in the quake-hit area. Another 100 living in a hamlet nearby the resort remained stranded,

AP

Rescue operation continues at a hot spring inn which was destroyed by a landslide triggered by Saturday's earthquake in Kurihara, northern Japan Monday, June 16, 2008.

some without water, and had to be slowly airlifted out by police and military helicopters.

The two-story hot spring resort was inundated when the hill behind it came crashing down.

A series of powerful aftershocks also hampered search efforts on Sunday. More than 470 aftershocks were recorded since the quake hit and officials warned more landslides were possible.

WORLD BRIEFS

Japan arrests 3 over Web posts

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese authorities have arrested three people accused of posting Internet messages warning they would commit crimes including murder, local news media reported Monday. The messages mimic those posted prior to a violent attack in Tokyo's Akihabara district that left seven people dead and 10 injured on June 8. The latest arrests reportedly include an unemployed 29-year-old man who police say posted on a popular Japanese Web site "I'm sick of it all. I'm going to do it too" and wrote he was going to "kill 100 people" in Ikebukuro, a crowded shopping and business area of Tokyo.

Bhutto homecoming attack suspect freed

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan has freed a key suspect in the suicide bombing that killed some 150 people at last year's homecoming rally for ex-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, his lawyer said Monday. Qari Saifullah Akhtar was released June 8 "on the expiry of his detention period" from prison in the southern city of Karachi, attorney Hashmat Habib said. Akhtar was not formally charged. Bhutto survived the October attack, which targeted her motorcade in Karachi as supporters welcomed her back from exile. The ex-premier was later killed in a gun and suicide bomb attack in December in the garrison city of Rawalpindi. She had accused Akhtar of involvement in the Karachi bombing in a book she finished writing before her assassination.

Pakistani party to choose next president

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—The chief of Pakistan's ruling coalition said Monday the country's next head of state will be from his party. The comments by Asif Ali Zardari at a gathering of hundreds of cheering supporters in the eastern city of Lahore indicate how political pressure is growing for President Pervez Musharraf to quit. "That day is not far away when ... the (Pakistan) People's Party will choose the president, God willing," Zardari told supporters who danced and chanted "Long live Bhutto!" Zardari became of leader his party after his wife, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, was assassinated in a gun and suicide bombing attack in December.

'Some accords with Muslim rebels may violate RP charter'

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Some agreements between the Philippine government and Muslim guerrillas may violate the country's constitution, an official said Tuesday, an admission that may complicate a search for peace in the south. A just-completed government legal study showed the country's 1987 constitution will have to be amended to legalize some initial accords with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to bring the years-long talks to a successful conclusion, chief government negotiator Rodolfo Garcia said. The talks, aimed at granting minority Muslims autonomy after decades of a bloody insurrection, faltered in December when the rebels walked away from the negotiations to protest Manila's insistence that any accord should conform with the constitution. The rebels say they want the agreements to stand on their own.

Bomb kills 4, hurts 5 in Pakistan mosque

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, Pakistan (AP)—A bomb exploded outside a Shiite mosque in northwest Pakistan on Monday, killing at least four people and wounding five others, police said.

The bomb exploded near the outer wall of the mosque in downtown Dera Ismail Khan as worshippers were leaving after evening prayers, said Abdul Ghafoor, a local police officer.

The blast shattered the mosque's front wall and damaged its dome. Twisted fans hung from the ceiling inside the mosque and prayer mats were scattered across the blood-stained floor.

Police cordoned off the area as people sifted debris looking for survivors. An Associated Press reporter saw a crater near the shattered wall where the bomb went off.

Ghafoor said four people had died in the bombing and five were wounded, three seriously.

Pakistan is struggling to combat a tide of Islamic militancy particularly in its volatile northwest. It has a history of violence between the majority Sunni and minority Shiite Muslims.

While most members of the two sects co-exist peacefully, violence by extremist elements is common.

Last month, gunmen opened fire on a car killing four Shiite Muslims in Dera Ismail Khan. Hours later, a Sunni was shot dead elsewhere in the city.

The Sunni-Shiite schism originates in a dispute dating back to the seventh century over who was the true heir to Islam's Prophet Muhammad.

World

Iraqi violence down; war's cause unresolved

BAGHDAD (AP)—Signs are emerging that Iraq has reached a turning point. Violence is down, armed extremists are in disarray, government confidence is rising and sectarian communities are gearing up for a battle at the polls rather than slaughter in the streets.

Those positive signs are attracting little attention in the United States, where the war-weary public is focused on the American presidential contest and skeptical of talk of success after so many years of unfounded optimism by the war's supporters.

Unquestionably, the security and political situation in Iraq is fragile. U.S. commanders warn repeatedly that security gains are reversible.

Still, Iraq is by almost any measure safer today than at any time in the past three years. Fears that the country will disintegrate have receded—though they have not disappeared.

AP

Iraqi security forces maintain a checkpoint in Amarah, 320 kilometers (200 miles) southeast of Baghdad, Iraq on Monday, June 16, 2008.

The wave of sectarian massacres that pushed the country to the brink of all-out civil war in 2006 has calmed.

Shiite-Sunni reprisal killings still occur. But gangs of Sunni and Shiite death squads no longer roam the streets at night with impunity, seeking out victims from the rival religious community.

Last month, at least 532 Iraqi civilians and security troopers were killed, according to figures compiled by The Associated Press from Iraqi police and military reports.

Although the number remains high, May's total was down sharply from April's figure of 1,080 and was the lowest monthly figure this year, according to the AP count. By comparison, the AP count showed at least 1,920 Iraqis died in January 2007.

American deaths last month—19 including four non-combat fatalities—were the lowest monthly tally of the war. In May 2007, 126 American service members died.

Many Sunni insurgents have stopped fighting and turned against al-Qaida in Iraq, which U.S. commanders say still remains a threat.

But those Sunni groups—loosely organized and still armed—could resume the fight if the Shiite-dominated national leadership fails to deliver on promises of economic help and a share of power. Critics believe U.S. support for such groups, known collectively as "awakening councils," could set the stage for future conflict.

In the meantime, Sunnis who once shunned politics are gearing up to contest provincial elections this fall.

Al-Sadr followers warn vs warrantless arrests

BAGHDAD (AP)—Followers of anti-U.S. cleric Muqtada al-Sadr signaled Monday that they won't resist a military crackdown in one of their last southern strongholds unless government troops make arrests without warrants or commit other violations.

The statements came three days before the expiration of a deadline for gunmen in the Sadrist stronghold of Amarah, capital of Maysan province, to surrender their weapons and renounce violence or face harsh measures.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, himself a Shiite, has sent U.S.-backed Iraqi troops to Amarah, a stronghold of al-Sadr's Mahdi Army militia and the purported center of weapons smuggling from Iran. The bid to clamp control on the city follows similar efforts in the Shiite areas of Basra and Baghdad's Sadr City and the northern Sunni insurgent bastion of Mosul.

Iraqi troops have fanned out en masse in the Tigris River city of some 450,000 people, 200 miles southeast of Baghdad, erecting new checkpoints and stationing tanks and Humvees on bridges in preparation for the operation.

But no fighting has been reported, in contrast to the fierce resistance that met the start of a government offensive in late March in Basra. That fighting spread to Sadr City before the cleric announced a series of cease-fires.

The Sadrist governor of Maysan province said local officials have expressed their support for "the imposing law operation," to begin later this week.

But Gov. Adel Mhodir also warned against "human rights violations during the raids or cases of arrests without warrants," a complaint among Sadrists who accuse the government of unfairly targeting their movement nationwide.

"There is agreement among all the parties and blocs, including al-Sadr's office, on the necessity of imposing the law ... yet the rights of the citizens should be preserved while this operation is implemented," Mhodir added in a statement on the provincial government's Web site.

An al-Sadr aide in the holy city of Najaf also said the movement "has no problem with the government's efforts to impose law and order in Myasan and in all of Iraq."

But the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorize to discuss the sensitive topic, said the group would draw the line at what it deems unfair arrests.

"We have no objection to the demilitarization of Amarah, but we have some reservations that human rights violations might occur and that the operation will only target the Sadrists as if they are the only party that has weapons in Amarah," the official said.

A delegation from Najaf and local officials in Amarah were trying to ensure that all groups will be treated fairly, he added.

EU to issue stronger Iran sanctions

LUXEMBOURG (AP)—The European Union agreed Monday on the need to sharpen sanctions on Iran—possibly targeting the oil and gas sectors in what would mark Europe's strongest punishments yet to discourage Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

The EU's tougher stance follows Iran's latest refusal to accept an economic incentives in exchange for halting uranium enrichment, which Tehran insists is for energy-producing reactors but Western nations and others fear could be used to develop nuclear weapons.

Washington's European allies have been far more cautious on punishing Iran because of deep business and energy ties. But the latest move—which is not yet final—would strike directly at Iran's economic base and its plans to expand gas and oil exports to Europe at a time of record-high prices.

"Action will start today in a new phase of sanctions on oil and gas," said British Prime Minister Gordon Brown at a London news conference with President Bush. "We will take any necessary action so that Iran is aware of the choice it needs to make."

Brown also announced that Britain will freeze the assets of Iran's largest bank, Bank Melli, in a separate—but largely symbolic—clampdown on Iran that could be followed by EU partners. The bank has only limited investments in Europe, and Iranian authorities have most likely been preparing for such an asset freeze.

Bush ends Europe trip with good news

LONDON (AP)—British Prime Minister Gordon Brown handed President Bush good news on two fronts Monday: a modest increase in Britain's troops for the tough Afghanistan fight and a fresh European effort to squeeze Iran's nuclear ambitions.

The deeply unpopular prime minister seemed to calculate he had more to gain politically by being hawkish than he risked losing by appearing at the side of the also unpopular Bush. Brown's predecessor, Tony Blair, was wounded by the impression he did too much of Bush's bidding.

But there's no greater platform for publicity than a joint appearance with the U.S. president. So Brown talked tough on Iran, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe and other issues when the two leaders addressed reporters in an ornate Foreign Office hall after two days of meetings.

The announcements by Brown, combined with earlier pledges by other allies, allowed the White House to crow that Bush was returning home from his weeklong European trip with new commitments, although aides had said beforehand there would be none. At every stop, Bush heard the kind of tough talk and promises on Iran that he wanted, and Italy announced welcome changes to its Afghanistan military presence.

Brown notably showed no daylight with Bush on Iraq, the issue that most got Blair into political trouble. Brown said he would not reduce the 4,000-strong British force level any further for any reason other than success in training Iraqi forces, speeding up development and seeing local elections through.

AP

President Bush and first Lady Laura Bush step off Marine One after arrive on the South Lawn of the White House, Monday, June 16, 2008, in Washington.

"I'm determined that we continue to do that job," Brown said.

France: A new defense plan for new threats

PARIS (AP)—France announced a vision Monday for its 21st-century military—a leaner, smarter and more high-tech force capable of detecting threats like terrorism early and deploying quickly to battlefields abroad.

The outlook was laid out in the first top-to-bottom review of the defense posture of this nuclear-armed country in 14 years. The review, nearly a year in the making, suggests that France wants to move closer to the NATO alliance—while maintaining a free hand on its commitments.

The review comes as France, like many other European countries, is grappling with aging military equipment, tight budget constraints and threats like terrorism, drug trafficking and Internet-based crime.

"Weapons always need to evolve," Defense Minister Herve Morin told Associated Press Television News at an arms show outside Paris. "We are adapting our defenses against such new threats as, for example, terrorist threats, the risk of nuclear proliferation."

The document places a greater focus on intelligence-gathering and more spending on satellite and airborne drones—paid for in part by reducing staff. The review calls for a reduction of 54,000 defense jobs among the Defense Ministry's total staff of about 340,000 today.

President Nicolas Sarkozy is to present the plan to military and security officials Tuesday. The new strategy, to be discussed in parliament later this month, foresees no expansion of France's nuclear arsenal, though it says that will remain the country's "life insurance."

The review will play a key role in shaping France's five-year military planning law, expected to be passed later this year.

Campus Life

Smart talk from the 'sex ed girl'

By FRANCISCO VARA-ORTA
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Andreina Cordova has a 15-minute window to change a life, just a few moments between the dismissal of classes and the beginning of soccer practice.

She wants to speak to anyone who will listen—about making smart decisions about sex.

She plunges into the throng of students on the sidewalk outside King/Drew Magnet High School of Science and Medicine.

She has memorized pages and pages of information on sex education and sexually transmitted diseases. She's ready to pass out cards from Planned Parenthood, listing services and clinics. She is also armed with condoms.

Andreina is 15. She's been attending Planned Parenthood sex education events since the age of 13. She had just finished eighth grade when she became one of the youngest students ever hired to be a peer advocate in a program whose goal is to reduce teen pregnancy and STD rates.

And that may be why some of the kids at school assume certain things about Andreina.

"People are like, just because she does this peer counseling, she is going to have sex like that," said Bryanna Rivera, who is also 15 and a friend.

But they don't know Andreina.

Asked why a 15-year-old would risk insults, humiliation and rejection to counsel peers on birth control and STDs, Andreina summons the memory of a middle-school classmate who became pregnant and dropped out.

A few weeks after her classmate left school, Andreina attended her first safe-sex awareness event hosted by Planned Parenthood.

She quickly understood her goal: to educate teenagers on how to make wise decisions.

"I mean, I was in middle school. They don't teach you a lot about sex there," Andreina said.

But first she had one large hurdle to clear: her parents.

Cars pack the driveway of Andreina's house on a Sunday morning.

Inside, three generations of Cordova women gather along with Andreina's father, Andres, 50. The conversation among the Salvadoran American family alternates between English and Spanish.

Andreina, whom the family calls "Gina," is the youngest of five sisters; four still live with their parents and maternal grandmother, Carmen. All the sisters are in high school or college, and four of them, including Andreina, want to work in health care.

The parent-teenager dance is one that Andreina has learned by watching her sisters grow up.

When she asked to attend her first Planned Parenthood event, Andreina said, "my parents at first didn't know what I was doing."

So when Andres said yes, her sisters were shocked.

But Andres explained: "My parents never talked to me about sex. So many of us back in El Salvador just had to figure out things on our own, from our friends usually."

On the day before school closed for a three-week break, Andreina stopped about 12 students on the campus' sidewalks. The girls seemed receptive; the boys, amused.

> 'There's a time in my life that's going to come when I'll have to make some of the same decisions I'm counseling for but it's not the right time for me yet. And I'm comfortable with that.'

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Andreina Cordova fixes her hair in her Paramount, Calif., bedroom as her grandmother, Carmen, watches. "There's a time in my life that's going to come when I'll have to make some of the same decisions I'm counseling for," she says.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Andreina Cordova, second from right, leads a game of bingo with male and female anatomical reproductive parts. Cordova has been doing sex-ed counseling since she was 12, when one of her classmates became pregnant and dropped out of school.

She briefly spoke with two classmates. The 16-year-old boys listened intently, their grins fading as she rattled off a list of STDs to watch out for. They asked about the symptoms of chlamydia—pain during urination or in the groin area—with one of them adding: "Can you keep this private?"

Andreina nodded.

"You know where to find me if you have more questions," she added.

Andreina's work is anchored in Planned Parenthood's Ujima Program, which preaches more abstinence and less sex. At least "until you know what you're getting into and the consequences," Andreina said.

The program was launched in 2002 after research indicated that teens were more likely to feel comfortable discussing sex with peers instead of parents, said Mary-Jane Wagle, president and chief executive of Planned Parenthood Los Angeles.

Andreina "understands the experience of teens in her area—she has lived there, and she understands what they are going through," Wagle said. "Her knowing all that firsthand gives her authority to be a leader and get people to listen."

All peer advocates undergo three days of training and must pass a test before they are hired into the program. Andreina and the other participants meet once a week in a small clinic in South L.A. to discuss safe-sex issues and coordinate events.

She's learned how to work within the guidelines set by school administrators, who asked her not to distribute condoms on campus but did allow her to leave them in the nurse's office.

But those who know Andreina only as the "sex ed girl," as her friend Bryanna puts it, don't understand the woman she's working to become.

On school days, Andreina wakes up no later than 6 a.m. to make the 30- to 45-minute commute to school. She goes through a full day, always missing lunch on Wednesdays to attend two club meetings for 15 minutes each.

A glance at her schedule shows an extracurricular activity planned every day after school: a community service club, the Planned Parenthood peer meeting, soccer practice, the school newspaper. She gets home around 7 p.m., has dinner and hits the books until bedtime around 10:30, hoping to raise her only B, in geometry, to an A. Later in the semester, when soccer season ends, she'll fill her schedule with art club, guitar lessons and salsa classes.

On weekends, it's "all homework, 24-7," she said with a smirk, sitting cross-legged on her bed one Sunday afternoon.

"I'm always trying to get her to hang out, but she's too busy trying to save the world," her sister Jennifer, 16, a junior at Paramount High School, lamented in the doorway to her room.

Andreina's eagerness to engage in discussions about safe sex can be disarming. Barely 5 feet tall, she dresses modestly, frequently wears her long, glossy hair in a ponytail and uses minimal makeup. When strangers see her coming, they don't expect her to offer them a condom.

On a Saturday afternoon in late April, Andreina and five other peer advocates set up a booth at a health fair in a Los Angeles-area park.

As the sun warmed the grounds, Andreina and two other students, Julio Penaloza, 18, and Angelica Woodard, 16, left the booth and made their way through the crowds. Angelica carried a wicker basket full of pamphlets and condoms.

Andreina served as ringleader, approaching strangers, introducing herself and her peers—sometimes in English, sometimes in Spanish—and asking if they were interested in hearing about Planned Parenthood's services. Some asked questions, others just listened, others nervously accepted a directory on clinic locations or a handful of condoms.

Thirty or so had gathered under a tree to shield themselves from the heat. Among them were six teenage boys in soccer uniforms.

"Are you guys under the age of 18?" Andreina asked.

Yes, responded a 16-year-old.

Andreina introduced herself. The boys, she said, were welcome to "come kick it any time" at the Ujima Teen Center.

She mentioned the services available—health exams, birth control, STD testing, free condoms—and the location.

She paused, then effortlessly asked the 16-year-old: "Do you want some condoms?"

He smirked and replied, "Yeah, sure."

"Do you have any questions?" Andreina asked.

"Where is it located again?"

"Eighty-fifth and Broadway."

As Andreina walked away, the boy shouted at her: "You're cute!" His teammates giggled, and he lobbed another grenade: "I love you!" he yelled, louder this time.

Rolling her eyes and shaking her head, Andreina said, "That's been happening a little more lately."

Although Andreina has purposely maneuvered herself into the middle of a neighborhood health crisis, she is still a kid who shares a room with her 70-year-old grandmother.

There are Salvadoran flags on her wall, stuffed animals on her bed. All of the "Harry Potter" books and a copy of Halo 3 for Xbox sit on her nightstand.

The family had just celebrated her *quinceanera*, the party that marks a girl's transition from childhood to adulthood.

But in many ways, family, friends and peers say, Andreina has already arrived.

"I look up to her even though she's my little sister," said Erika, a 21-year-old student at the University of California, Los Angeles. "None of us have been capable of her balancing act."

Andres Cordova seems impressed as well: "There's an age for everything," he said. "I worried Andreina was too young to know about sex and thought, Well, if one knows how to do something, there could arise the curiosity to try it out."

He paused, looking at her seated on the couch, and added, "But I trust her to do the right thing."

Andres said Andreina's work as a peer advocate was more of a health issue than a moral one, and thinks that learning about the consequences of unprotected sex has actually pushed Andreina closer to abstinence.

"There's a time in my life that's going to come when I'll have to make some of the same decisions I'm counseling for," she said, "but it's not the right time for me yet. And I'm comfortable with that."

Life & Style

Last day in Korea

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Last part of a series

This was our last day in Korea and it was a feeling of both relief, that we are finally going home after a long week of being away from close friends and family, and sadness that it was simultaneously not a long enough week, with just so much more that that the group wanted to visit and do.

We started off the day with breakfast at the hotel before we hit the streets to meet up with JCI members and then do a little bit of last minute shopping before going to the airport.

After breakfast, we packed our bags and all met at the bus around 9:30am.

It was not until about 12:30pm when we stopped by an Italian restaurant where we were greeted by officials of the Junior Chamber International.

RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN

CNMI delegates pose for a group photo with JCI officials after a farewell lunch at a popular Italian Restaurant in Seoul.

Apparently, the JCI group arranged a small farewell lunch ceremony for the CNMI delegates. All were surprised but charmed at the kind gesture.

This was the first time the group had pasta while in Korea. Which I thought was a little bit sad, if one would really think about it—no more bulgogi surprise, no more straight from the live fish market Korean sashimi, no more fresh kimchi.

After lunch, JCI and the CNMI delegates all met outside the restaurant to take group photos and exchange gifts.

After the little gathering, JCI CNMI president Yong Chul Jang and members Nicky Kim and Jae Kim took the group to a place called Doota, a famous eight-story shopping mall in the DongDaemoon shopping area in Seoul.

The place divided its sections into floors such as a mini-flea market on the basement, women's clothing on the first floor, men's clothing on the second floor, children's section on the third floor and so on and so forth. I thought this made it easy to find what it is you're looking for.

We spent a good four hours in the shopping mall—shopping for clothes, shoes, souvenirs, and other cutesy things that didn't really made sense only because we didn't have it back home. Tourist, much?

It was about an hour and a half, possibly two-hour drive to the Incheon International Airport so we had to make sure that everybody were to meet at one place in order to prevent leaving somebody behind in Korea.

Thankfully, we all made it and in good time as well.

As I said earlier, it was pretty sad having to finally leave the city with the people who gave the group only the warmest hospitality; but it was also nice to finally go back home.

RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela and CNMI exchange student Meagan Flores pose for a photo after long hours of shopping at the eight story high shopping mall Doota.

RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN

CNMI delegates gather around for a group photo at the Incheon International Airport.

'The kimono is a canvas'

By BLAKE GOPNIK
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WASHINGTON—Naoki Nomura, who is 59, is one of the living masters of the Kyo Yuzen style of kimono design, based on a dyeing technique perfected in Kyoto around the middle of Japan's Edo period, which lasted from 1603 to 1867. "Four Seasons of Kyoto," a show of Nomura's work now at the Japan Information and Culture Center, surveys the full scope of his craft. The motifs on the exhibition's kimonos range from almost-abstract riverscapes to relatively realistic close-ups on blooming cherry trees. Wearing traditional Japanese dress and speaking through an interpreter, Nomura discussed his craft.

Nomura

"I was born into a kimono family. And ever since I was little, I have always been interested in pretty things, in beautiful things. At the same time I've always liked drawing. So Kyo Yuzen was a way to incorporate my love of drawing as well as my passion and family tradition in kimono.

"The kimono is a canvas. I am inspired by the style of paintings that were popular in the Edo era—I am more inspired by that than Western abstract art. I often use a color called "sumi"—it's actually taken from charcoal. And that's a traditional form of paint or ink, but it can still be incorporated into kimono design that is contemporary. Regardless of the era that it is, I try to make kimonos that appeal to everybody, that are loved by everybody. I hope grandmothers can wear them, as well as daughters and granddaughters. And within the past decade, men seem to be wearing more kimonos than before. But even though I personally wear a kimono every day, I understand that it's improbable to expect everybody to wear a kimono every day. So as long as I can see kimonos in tea ceremonies and parties, that makes me happy.

THE WASHINGTON POST

"The kimono is a canvas," says Naoki Nomura, a living master of the form. "I am inspired by the style of paintings that were popular in the Edo era—I am more inspired by that than Western abstract art."

"But when I create a kimono, I think less about the Japanese society of today than about how I can showcase the kimono to other societies. Many non-Japanese people wear my kimonos: I know Washingtonians who've bought kimonos from me, as well as New Yorkers and Europeans. But it is difficult to learn to wear them, so they go to someone else, like a kimono teacher, to help them. They are so enthusiastic about it that they are much quicker than regular Japanese people to remember how to wear it correctly, so the next time they can do it alone.

"A kimono is not made to be seen, it's made to be worn. 'Kimono' literally means 'thing to wear.' So when a viewer sees a kimono, I really want the viewer to imagine him- or herself wearing it, and then to appreciate its beauty. Rather than to imagine somebody else wearing it."

Comedians of clout

By MICHAEL CAVNA
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THE WASHINGTON POST

Pointed campaign humor has more prominent platforms in this historic presidential election than ever before, from YouTube to Onion.com videos to the continued growth of satiric cable comedy. Can satirists affect our perceptions of the candidates? Yes, they can.

WASHINGTON—The Onion newspaper jokingly dissects how Barack Obama calculates his every facial expression to convey the countenance of Inspirational Leadership. Jon Stewart jests that Obama strikes poses so evocative of the forefathers on our currency, he's not campaigning merely for president but rather is "running for coin." And comic Lewis Black kvetches during a recent Washington performance that Obama exudes such off-the-charts optimism in these trying times, "even his nipples are filled with hope!"

Yes, nation, our sharpest satirists are ramping up. As they chip-chip-chip away at presumptive nominees Obama and John McCain to get laughs, they're also sculpting handy-dandy political caricatures that begin to take hold in the public chatosphere. Pointed campaign humor has more prominent platforms in this historic presidential election than ever before, from YouTube to Onion.com videos to the continued growth of satiric cable comedy.

Not that most satirists are quick to claim singular credit for our perceptions of the candidates; many humorists, in fact, insist they have no phone-booth costume changes to lend them cultural kapow. But some satirists, such as James Downey—the veteran "Saturday Night Live" writer who coined the classic Bush malapropism "strategery"—believe a chorus of comic monologues can move the political needle with viewers, voters and a not-so-infallible media. "Satire has a role in the democratic process," he says, adding: "The right sketch can be worth more than 1,000 words in Foreign Affairs quarterly."

Could this new class of video-splicing entertainers be joining the great American club that editorial cartoonist Thomas Nast first founded with a pen more than a century ago?

Well, in the name of the greater public good, we've read the academic comedy studies (as oxymoronic as that sounds) and pored over the poll numbers. We resolved to watch more online video and late-night TV satire than you can shake a shtick at. We made pilgrimages to see Stewart and Black and Stephen Colbert and Bill Maher and Dave Chappelle perform their stand-up live—typically when they were tantalizingly within mere cab-meter clicks of the White House and the Capitol. Having recovered from this comic binge, there is only one rallying-cry reply to the question, "Can satirists affect our perceptions of the candidates?":

Yes, They Can. You bet your keister—Yes, They Can.

The last thing Downey wants is for you to take him seriously. At least when he's writing for NBC's "Saturday Night Live."

Downey has written many memorable election sketches for "SNL," including this season's mock Democratic debate that skewered the media with accusations of going soft on Obama. The sketch tripped the pop-culture radar when a campaigning Hillary Clinton referenced it in one of the debates—in an answer to a question about NAFTA. That thrust "SNL" into the center of a whole other debate: Some observers speculated that the comedic scrutiny actually altered press coverage; others countered that tougher Obama press was coming, and the late-night show simply showed great comic timing.

The sketch's author, though, insists that his own strategery involves only two goals: to be funny and not to be stupid. "I'm not trying to say something profound or important. ... I hope to God no one takes their political cues from me."

Yet Downey—who has crafted political sketches for 27 of "SNL's" 33 seasons—acknowledges that such humor, when it plugs squarely into the zeitgeist, can have a cultural resonance, especially if it comes from several people. "I have to believe when Stewart and Colbert and Bill Maher each do their own take," Downey says, "there is a cumulative effect of that."

Still, some writers for "SNL" and "The Daily Show" insist their only agenda is to be anti-Establishment: Shoot for the fattest, funniest targets in power—even those they make nice with when they're guests on the shows.

By contrast, satirists Maher and "Boondocks" creator Aaron McGruder say their material maintains a consistent political agenda—something that viewers "can plant their flag in," says Maher, who adds that his litmus test is: "If I took out the laughs, would it serve as an interesting speech?"

He tries "not to make jokes on a premise that I don't believe in" and says comedians have a responsibility to make sure the audience knows where the real premise ends and the punch lines begin. "The public is gullible," says Maher.

So we ask the host of HBO's "Real Time With Bill Maher": Do political comics do anything besides make us titter and guffaw?

"I definitely think so," says Maher by phone, while taking a break from finishing his satirical film "Religulous." "If someone does something twice, it becomes a reputation. Hillary becomes a congenital liar (after) all the comedians jump"—a reference to the candidate's false claim of coming under sniper attack in Bosnia. "If they're all making the same joke, that's the danger. Then there's a solidifying effect and it becomes a truth."

Maher comes to Constitution Hall weeks after a show there by Chris Rock, who delivered biting riffs on all three major presidential candidates. Rock—a vocal Obama supporter who portrayed a black presidential candidate in 2003's "Head of State"—downplays any political influence he himself might have as a comic, but he acknowledges the potential power of electoral satire. The comic, speaking by phone, says he grew up hearing the lesson that back in 1960, "Kennedy didn't beat Nixon. Satire beat Nixon."

Garry Trudeau, though—who first made a name for himself by satirizing Watergate-era Nixon—thinks that the satirist's wit makes not one whit of difference.

"I've never felt any of us had significant influence," says the Pulitzer-winning creator of "Doonesbury" (which returns this month after a hiatus). "For something to be funny, the audience has to be in a position to sense the truth of it. It has to be primed. Satire can crystallize what's already in the air, but it can't really put it there."

Ben Karlin, the co-creator of "The Colbert Report" and a veteran of "The Daily Show" and the Onion, echoes that zero-influence sentiment. "Satire is useless," says Karlin, whose recent humor anthology, "Things I've Learned From Women Who've Dumped Me," counts former Nebraska senator Bob Kerrey among its contributors. "If it wasn't, people would have gone ahead and eaten babies, like Swift so reasonably proposed." (Jonathan Swift, of course, famously gave Ireland the ultimate tongue-in-cheek twist on "baby food.")

Russell L. Peterson, an American studies professor at the University of Iowa, believes comics who refute satire's power are purposefully insincere. "But they have a good reason for being disingenuous," adds the author of "Strange Bedfellows: How Late-Night Comedy Turns Democracy Into a Joke." "Their comic license depends on them denying that."

For those who don't follow the media closely, satirical shows can hold even greater sway. If Stewart and Colbert and Maher are the ones installing the news in a viewer's mind—as part of their setup before instilling their humorous slant—then they're functioning as both messenger and comic massager: a one-stop plug-and-play for the iPod generation. For younger viewers especially, McGruder notes, satire is an inviting environment to get the news bundled with the jokes.

The blurring of news and entertainment, comedy and punditry, also contributes to the shift. When news accounts report in earnest that radiohead Rush Limbaugh might have the clout to tilt Hoosiers toward Hillary during a primary, it's not so far-fetched to speculate that a "Saturday Night Live" sketch—say, one that accuses reporters of going soft on Barack and being harder on Hillary—also might have a real-world ripple effect.

Black, who hosts Comedy Central's "Root of All Evil," is among the critics who contend: "People should not be getting news from comedians."

Ah, but they are.

Among viewers ages 18-29, 39 percent said they learned about the presidential candidates and campaign at least sometimes from comedy shows and late-night programs such as "Saturday Night Live" and "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart," according to a Pew Research Center survey last December.

Other News vs. Comedy cases pop up on the dial: In its season finale last month, "Saturday Night Live" attracted about 6.5 million viewers. "CBS Evening News" is averaging about 5.7 million viewers nightly. That means that Amy Poehler, the diminutive, perky faux anchor, garners a larger audience to watch her deliver fake news than Katie Couric, the diminutive, perky true-life anchor, does to see her deliver (begin ital) real (end ital) news.

A similar numbers game plays out on the cable channels. "The Daily Show" drew about 1.8 million viewers recently, as clocked for a Pew study, putting the program on a ratings par with Fox News' "Hannity and Colmes," and exceeding such other news-commentary shows as Chris Matthews' "Hardball" on MSNBC. In comparison, Fox News' "The O'Reilly Factor" draws about 2.6 million viewers nightly.

Pew's Tom Rosenstiel likes to quote a Michigan State University professor who last year relayed this: "My students tell me they read the news for the facts, but they watch Jon Stewart for the truth."

McGruder, the "Boondocks" creator, says satire appeals to many young people at a time when they're discovering politics. "That's your biggest window of opportunity," says the 34-year-old cartoonist, though "it may not manifest for another 10 to 15 years."

And once satire takes hold, perhaps its greatest influence is encouraging critical thought. "Good satire goes beyond the specific point it's trying to make and teaches you how to think critically," McGruder says. "Even after your favorite cartoonist retires or Colbert wraps it up, you're not left believing everything they're telling you."

Stan Winston dies of cancer at 62

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Stan Winston, the Oscar-winning special-effects maestro responsible for bringing the dinosaurs of "Jurrasic Park" and other iconic movie creatures to life, has died. He was 62.

Winston died at his home in Malibu surrounded by family on Sunday evening after a seven-year struggle with multiple myeloma, according to a representative from Stan Winston Studio.

Working with such directors as Steven Spielberg, James Cameron and Tim Burton in a career spanning four decades, Winston created some of the most memorable visual effects in cinematic history. He helped bring the dinosaurs from "Jurassic Park," the extraterrestrials from "Aliens, the robots from "Terminator" and even "Edward Scissorhands" to the big screen, and was a pioneer in merging real-world effects with computer imaging.

"The entertainment industry has lost a genius, and I lost one of my best friends with the death Sunday night of Stan Winston," Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said in a statement. "Stan's work and four Oscars speak for themselves and will live on forever. What will live forever in my heart is the way that Stan loved everyone and treated each of his friends like they were family."

AP

In this undated image released by Stan Winston Studio, Stan Winston is shown.

Winston won visual effects Oscars for 1986's "Aliens," 1992's "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" and 1993's "Jurassic Park." He also won a makeup Oscar for 1992's "Batman Returns."

Winston was nominated for his work on "Heartbeeps," "Predator," "Edward Scissorhands," "Batman Returns," "The Lost World: Jurassic Park" and "A.I."

He last worked with director Jon Favreau on "Iron Man."

"He was experienced and helped guide me while never losing his childlike enthusiasm," Favreau said in a statement. "He was the king of integrating practical effects with CGI, never losing his relevance in an ever changing industry. I am proud to have worked with him and we were looking forward to future collaborations. I knew that he was struggling, but I had no idea that he would be gone so soon. Hollywood has lost a shining star."

At the time of his death, Winston was in the process of transforming his physical makeup and effects studio into the new Winston Effects Group with a team of senior effects supervisors. Winton's most recent projects included "Terminator Salvation: The Future Begins," "G.I. Joe," "Shutter Island" and Cameron's "Avatar."

"He ran at full throttle, in both work and play, and was a man of kindness, wisdom and great humor," Cameron said in an e-mail to The Associated Press. "He was a kid that never grew up, whose dreams were writ large on the screens of the world. I am proud to have been his friend, and I will miss him very deeply."

As a child growing up in Virginia, Winston enjoyed drawing, puppetry and classic horror films. After graduating from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville in 1968, Winston moved to Southern California to become an actor but instead worked behind the scenes and completed a three-year makeup apprenticeship program at Walt Disney Studios in 1972.

Winston is survived by his wife, Karen; a son, daughter, brother and four grandchildren.

Slimmed down soprano Voigt returns to Royal Opera

LONDON (AP)—Deborah Voigt returns to the Royal Opera House stage Monday, four years after the company fired her for being too big for the little black dress chosen for the title character in Richard Strauss' "Ariadne auf Naxos." The decision sparked a fierce debate about weight discrimination in opera.

Now a slimmer Voigt is back in the same opera, the same role—and wearing "that" dress.

"When I got the call from my manager, I have to admit my first reaction was to laugh, because we had come full circle," Voigt told The Associated Press in an interview before opening night. "When that happened, I didn't anticipate ever coming back, because I didn't think they would invite me."

Voigt, one of the world's leading opera singers, had been scheduled to play the lead in the Royal Opera's summer 2004 production of "Ariadne." But the casting director decided the titular Greek goddess should wear a black evening dress and believed Voigt would not look right in it.

"I was angry about it at the time and for quite a while afterwards," said Voigt, who once called the attitude toward overweight people "the last bastion of open discrimination in our society."

However, Voigt had gastric bypass surgery in June 2004, three months after the story broke, and subsequently lost 135 pounds. She says she had been considering the surgery on health grounds for years, long before the black dress incident.

AP

This two picture combo shows on the left: soprano Deborah Voigt performing during a dress rehearsal of "Die Walkure" at the Metropolitan Opera in New York in a March 2004 file photo. On the right: Voigt performs during the Metropolitan Opera Gala honoring the Met's General Manager Joseph Volpe, in New York in a May 2006 file photo.

"I didn't need the Royal Opera House to tell me I was fat," Voigt said. "I knew I was fat."

She now concedes she wouldn't have been right for the production, and thinks opera's increased focus on image is here to stay.

"I think that the face of opera is changing," Voigt said. "To assume that one can weigh 300-plus pounds and still be viable on today's opera stage is naive. I tell that to young singers."

"Opera has changed immensely in my generation and it is going to change more."

In 2006, the Royal Opera rehired Voigt, announcing she would return to the role of Ariadne in the 2007-2008 season. Beyond that, the company refuses to discuss the incident, saying only that rehearsals have gone well and it is "looking forward with great excitement to Deborah Voigt's performances in 'Ariadne.'"

The ebullient Voigt seems to have put the episode squarely behind her. She has nothing but praise for her "warm and welcoming" reception by the Royal Opera, and has poked fun at the furor by releasing a YouTube video entitled "The Return of the Little Black Dress," in which she and her slinky nemesis make up.

"It just seemed at the time that we weren't a good fit," the dress tells the now-svelte singer in the clip. "But times change, people change."

Voigt said in 2004 that she didn't expect to be allowed to sing at the Royal Opera House as long as casting director Peter Katona remained. He's still there, and the pair have reconciled.

"I remember that Mr. Katona said some day we would be able to laugh about this," Voigt said. "And I said, 'Yeah, right.' But he was right."

Death Cab finds life on the road to their liking

MANCHESTER, Tenn. (AP)—"On the Road" with Death Cab for Cutie isn't just a weak pun for the touring band. Jack Kerouac's book is an inspiration to lead singer and songwriter Ben Gibbard, who wrote many of the songs on their new album "Narrow Stairs" at a cabin in California's Big Sur once occupied by the author.

Death Cab for Cutie performed Sunday at the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival where their powerful, rocking new material sounded befitting the large festival stage, as it did at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

The Seattle-based band is at an apparent apogee, both artistically and commercially. "Narrow Stairs," their second major label release for Atlantic Records, debuted no. 1 on the Billboard sales charts. (Their last album, "Plans," sold even better in its first week and recently went platinum.)

"I'm not going to lie, having the number one record is quite an accolade and is very exciting," said Gibbard in an interview backstage before the band's Bonnaroo performance. "But the fact that that many people had to go out and have it on the first week ... that makes me feel really good."

But "Narrow Stairs" might also be their best album yet—guitarist Chris Walla called it a "curveball" before it came out. It has drawn very positive reviews and their always energetic live performance now has a bigness to it that the softer songs on "Plans" didn't supply.

"It's really strange that our most successful record was the quietest, most introspective record we ever made," said Gibbard. "But I feel like with this new record, there's just a lot more guitars, there's a lot more rock, and in a way it feels a lot more akin to some of the material on the earlier records than `Transatlanticism' and `Plans.'"

Gibbard says that's not a result of any specific goal the band had for "Narrow Stairs," but an outcome from how it was recorded—in analog fashion, "like a band playing in a room."

"It certainly has been translating, so far, on these bigger stages a lot better," he said.

Gibbard and the band were politically involved last election year and the singer recalls playing Las Vegas on election day in 2004 as "one of the worst places to be in the country, let alone on such a tragic day, at least for my political persuasion."

AP

Death Cab for Cutie lead singer Ben Gibbard performs at the Bonnaroo music festival in Manchester, Tenn., Sunday, June 15, 2008.

This time around, Gibbard—a supporter of Barack Obama—has considered how he'll approach politics on the stage.

"I look back now on some of the things I might have said on stage or some of the things I might have done in particular areas of the country ... and am maybe a little bit embarrassed about the way I handled myself," said Gibbard. "On most occasions, I did it the right way, but there was a couple times I did it the wrong way."

The band will be touring through the summer, playing both amphitheater and theater gigs with Rogue Wave. They head to Europe in July where they have more festivals scheduled and will be in Japan for the Summer Sonic festival before several stops in Australia in August.

Gibbard acknowledges life on the road today is a little cleaner, a little more civilized than it was in Kerouac's day, but he thinks the core of the experience is still there.

"This lifestyle allots us a lot of similar types of relationships and a similar type of worldliness that makes you realize that people really aren't that different," said Gibbard. "There's something really great about being in a band and breezing into a town that you've been to a handful of times and you have friends there.

"It's weird that I now know a good restaurant and a good bar in Brussels. Why would I know that?

Pap blamed for Spears' hit-run mishap

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A paparazzo who pressed charges against Britney Spears after her car allegedly ran over his foot was himself to blame for any injury it may have caused, prosecutors said in refusing to pursue the case.

After reviewing police records and a videotape of the incident last year, Deputy District Attorney Joseph D. Shidler wrote Friday that the "only way the victim's foot could have been where the video indicates it to be was by the victim placing it in that location."

The photographer, who was not identified in the report, filed a criminal complaint against Spears in early May, nearly six months after the alleged incident. A copy of the police complaint was not immediately available Monday, but it sought a felony charge of failing to stop after an accident involving an injury.

Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley's office reviewed a videotape and photos of the incident, which don't show the photographer being hit. The report also describes a chaotic scene surrounding Spears, with photographers on all sides of her car and "a lot of noise and confusion."

AP

In this Dec. 1, 2007 file photo, singer Britney Spears poses on the press line at the Scandinavian Style Mansion party in Los Angeles.

The report describes Spears' as "driving at an extremely slow rate of speed and in a straight path."

The 26-year-old pop star has had her share of trouble behind the wheel, including a highly publicized incident in 2006 where she was photographed driving with her son on her lap.

A misdemeanor hit-and-run charge stemming from a 2007 parking lot crash was dismissed after she settled with the car's owner. In October, she pleaded not guilty to a misdemeanor charge of driving without a valid license, and earlier this year was involved in a minor fender-bender on a Los Angeles freeway.

Also Monday, documents were released detailing a request from Spears' father for payments relating to his conservatorship arrangement.

The document filed on behalf of James Spears seeks an undisclosed amount of money for helping his daughter shop for groceries, handle custody issues with her husband, Kevin Federline, and visiting her in the hospital in February and March. The filing also states that he held meetings to shore up security at Spears' homes and occasionally cooked meals.

James Spears has temporary control of his daughter's finances. A hearing about that conservatorship is scheduled for Tuesday morning in Los Angeles.

Winehouse taken to hospital after fainting spell

LONDON (AP)—Amy Winehouse fainted Monday at her north London home and was hospitalized, her spokesman said.

Winehouse lost consciousness but an assistant caught her before she hit the ground, spokesman Chris Goodman said.

"She quickly recovered and her father, Mitch, took her to hospital as a precaution," Goodman said in a statement.

Winehouse had spent the afternoon signing autographs for Canadian fans who were standing outside her house. She collapsed after they left.

Goodman said doctors are unsure what caused the collapse and the 24-year-old singer was undergoing tests.

She may stay in the hospital overnight as a precaution, he said.

Winehouse's career has prospered despite wild nights, missed concerts and stints in drug rehab. The Sunday Times newspaper's annual Rich List has estimated her wealth at $20 million.

AP

Jazz Soul diva Amy Winehouse, from England, has a drink while performing to 90,000 spectators on the main stage of the Rock in Rio Lisboa music festival at the Bela Vista Park, Lisboa Portugal in this May 30, 2008 file photo.

Paula Deen resto reopens after fire

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP)—A restaurant owned by well-known Southern chef Paula Deen reopened for lunch Monday following a late-night fire.

Savannah Fire and Emergency Services Capt. Matt Stanley said firefighters responded to a blaze about 11 p.m. Sunday at The Lady & Sons eatery. No injuries were reported.

He said the blaze apparently started in a laundry bag full of linens and rags.

Stanley said investigators believe the rags had oils in them that broke down and generated their own heat, causing a spontaneous combustion.

He said the fire generated heavy smoke, but firefighters were able to pull the bag from the restaurant and no water had to be used to douse the blaze.

Evans weds ex-Alabama QB Barker

AP

In this April 14, 2008 file photo former University of Alabama quarterback Jay Barker and Sara Evans arrive at the 2008 CMT Awards in Nashville, Tenn.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Sara Evans has married former University of Alabama quarterback Jay Barker. Lori Genes, the country star's publicist at Sony BMG Nashville, told The Associated Press on Monday the couple had married, but didn't provide details.

People magazine reported on its Web site that the outdoor ceremony took place Saturday on a farm in Franklin, Tenn.

The 37-year-old singer filed for divorce from Craig Schelske in October 2006 after 13 years of marriage. The divorce was completed last September.

Barker led Alabama to a national championship in 1992. He hosts a radio show in Birmingham.

Barker, who also is divorced, has four children; Evans has three.

Evans made her recording debut in 1997. Her 2000 album, "Born to Fly," went double-platinum. Her hits include "Perfect," "Suds in the Bucket" and "Real Fine Place to Start."

She was a contestant on ABC's "Dancing With the Stars," but pulled out when she filed for divorce.

Private eye wants new wiretaps trial

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hollywood private investigator Anthony Pellicano wants his convictions in a wiretapping case thrown out and says there were several instances of juror misconduct in his federal trial.

Attorneys representing the 64-year-old private eye filed a motion seeking a new trial Monday. The motion claims that at least four jurors talked about the case among themselves without other jurors present and that one juror knew about an upcoming witness because her husband read a blog tracking the trial.

Program gives returning vets free computer skills training

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: Please help me alert your readers about an important program launched by companies in the information technology (IT) industry to educate, train, certify and provide job placement assistance for returning veterans. Military who successfully complete the Creating Futures program will have the knowledge and skill level they need to start a rewarding career in IT.

Creating Futures is free for all participants. The cost is covered by organizational sponsors such as HP, Xerox and Ricoh.

The Creating Futures program is tailored to help individuals with various levels of skill. Individuals who have honed their computer skills in the military will be taught how to transfer those skills to civilian life, and those who are new to IT will be taught the basic skills they need to pursue a career in information technology.

Returning veterans, people with disabilities, youth-at-risk and dislocated workers interested in participating in the program should visit www.creatingfutures.us for information on how to participate.

JOHN VENATOR,
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

DEAR JOHN: Thank you for bringing this to the attention of my readers. I'm sure many individuals in each of the categories you mentioned will be interested in learning more about the Creating Futures program.

Readers, as workers in the baby boom generation begin retiring, they will leave a significant gap in the talent pool of the technology industry. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that there will be 600,000 more jobs than available employees in the IT industry by 2012. This could be opportunity knocking, so please spread the word.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have been fortunate in most areas of my life. I have a loving husband, a beautiful apartment, and will graduate from law school in a few months. My problem is my parents are indifferent about anything I have achieved in my life. They refuse to visit our home or acknowledge my milestones -- like high school or college graduations and my wedding.

What have I done wrong to make them so ashamed of me? And how can I make them love me and show some pride in their eldest daughter?

UPSET DOWN SOUTH

DEAR UPSET: You have accomplished much in your young life. That your parents are unable -- or unwilling -- to give you the acknowledgment you crave is more a reflection on them than it is on you. Not knowing them, I can't say what their reason is.

However, you are no longer a child. Rather than continue blaming yourself, it's time to take a long, hard look at THEM and ask yourself what kind of people would treat their first-born child the way you have been treated. Then draw your own conclusions and go on with your life.

You can't get blood from a stone, and you can't force loveless people to love you. But you can stop beating yourself up for not being able to "please" them and go on to live a happy and useful life, and that's what I'm advising you to do.

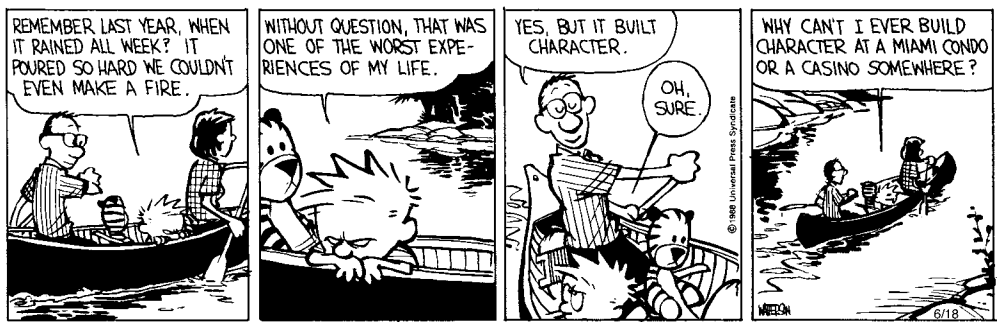
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


REMEMBER LAST YEAR, WHEN IT RAINED ALL WEEK? IT POURED SO HARD WE COULDN'T EVEN MAKE A FIRE.
WITHOUT QUESTION, THAT WAS ONE OF THE WORST EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE.
YES, BUT IT BUILT CHARACTER.
OH, SURE.
WHY CAN'T I EVER BUILD CHARACTER AT A MIAMI CONDO OR A CASINO SOMEWHERE?
© 1988 Universal Press Syndicate
6/18

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

TOMORROW IS MY BIRTHDAY...
THIS YEAR I SHALL CELEBRATE IN AN AGE-APPROPRIATE MANNER
COOL!
I LOVE MUSICAL WHEELCHAIRS!
JIM DAVIS 6-18
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Text GARFIELD to 22646 US ONLY
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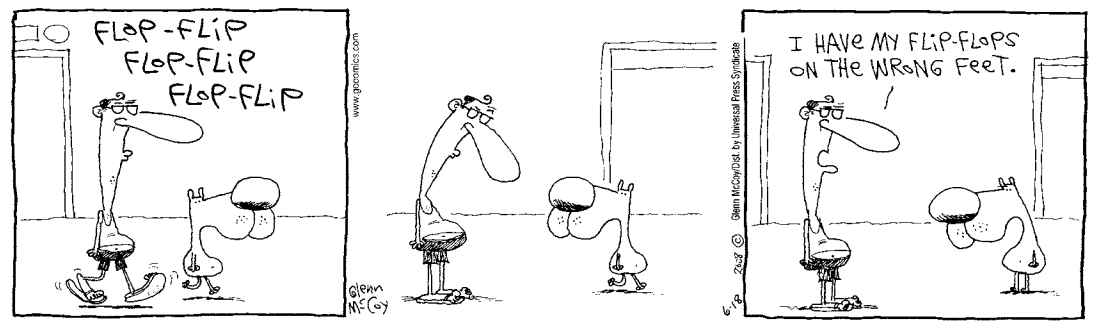
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

NO MORE SCHOOL!
NOW WE'RE FREE TO DISRUPT YOUR WORK ALL SUMMER LONG!
I MUST SAY, HE'S TAKING IT QUITE WELL.
HE'S IN A TEMPORARY FOG. HE EITHER JUST GOT UP FROM A NAP OR HE ACCIDENTALLY DRANK DECAF THIS MORNING.
OOOH! THINK HE COULD STAY IN A TEMPORARY FOG ALL SUMMER?!
6/18
BRIAN BASSET

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

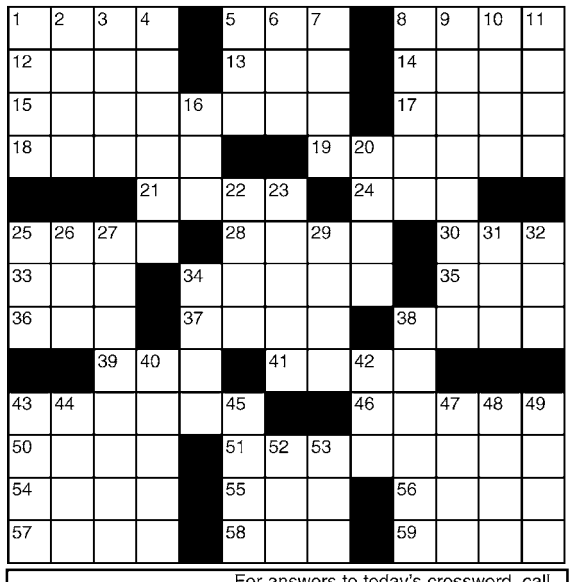
ACROSS
1 Government agts.
5 Part of a roadie's load
8 Competent
12 Latin 101 word
13 Luau bowlful
14 Spruced up
15 Succotash ingredient
17 Profit
18 Where the action is
19 Actress Jackson
21 Boast
24 High mountain
25 Act mockingly
28 "There's Something About Mary" star
30 Peculiar
33 Worldwide work grp.
34 Name
35 Mainlander's memento
36 Solidify
37 Formerly
38 Profound
39 Listener
41 Listen to
43 Sarajevo's land
46 High-carb entree
50 Initial chip
51 Lucas saga
54 Ollie's pal
55 That girl
56 Needle case
57 Do mailroom work
58 Sweet potato
59 Shipwreck cause

DOWN
1 FDR's dog
2 Eastern potentate
3 Titled lady
4 Position
5 Mimic
6 Old bird of New Zealand
7 — -pong
8 Clarence, in "It's a Wonderful Life"
9 Tall, thin person
10 Deposited
11 Sicilian volcano
16 Prohibit
20 Lounge around
22 Valhalla VIP
23 Dorothy's antagonist
25 Leprechauns' dance
26 Hearty brew
27 Guiding principle
29 Sheltered
31 Sandra or Ruby
32 Pickpocket
34 Actress Spelling
38 Chest component
40 Concerning
42 Springtime abbr.
43 Low voice
44 Aware of
45 Wan
47 Fill till full
48 Verifiable
49 "Yeah, right!"
52 Afternoon affair
53 Branch

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	P	S	E	■	O	C	T	■	H	O	P	E
N	A	I	L	■	M	A	H	■	O	B	E	Y
I	R	R	I	T	A	T	E	■	R	I	T	E
■	■	■	J	A	R	■	H	U	N	T	E	D
S	P	E	A	R	■	B	A	N	E	■	■	■
H	I	G	H	■	C	O	G	I	T	A	T	E
A	L	G	■	S	H	O	U	T	■	K	I	D
H	E	S	I	T	A	T	E	■	B	I	N	G
■	■	■	T	I	N	Y	■	T	E	N	S	E
O	N	W	A	R	D	■	O	A	T	■	■	■
H	E	A	L	■	L	E	V	I	T	A	T	E
M	A	G	I	■	E	R	E	■	E	V	I	L
S	P	E	C	■	R	A	N	■	R	E	E	F

Yesterday's answer 6-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Carol Kane, 56; Isabella Rossellini, 56; Roger Ebert, 66; Paul McCartney, 66

Happy Birthday: You can stabilize your personal life by making important changes to your portfolio or developing a new budget. Improve your living quarters or move to a place better suited to your needs. A partnership can make a difference to something you have wanted for a long time. Traveling will enhance the outcome of a situation you face. Your numbers are 2, 7, 19, 22, 31, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Give yourself some pamper time. Love and romance are in a high astrological cycle, so do something special with your lover or, if single, participate in things you like to do and you will meet someone who rocks your world. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't be shy or reluctant to try new things. Going to new destinations will broaden your horizons and make you more versatile in your outlook. Someone you least expect will offer something that will help. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You'll be pulled in too many directions. Prepare to say no. You may be torn between two friends or lovers and, if you continue to be indecisive, you will only make matters worse. Take action and put things behind you. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): If you give in to someone else's wishes instead of following your own path, you will have regrets. You have better ideas and can offer more if you are a participant. Do your thing and others will join in. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Dream a little dream and you can turn it into the real deal. You will have plenty of people who want to help you along and even more who want a piece of the action. Your entertaining personality will lead you to the winner's circle. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Start making some long overdue changes regarding your life, your love and your profession. Think about what you've already accomplished and you will come up with new and exciting goals that will allow you to expand your horizons. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): The more you can fit into your day, the more you will benefit. Approach everything you have in a unique way that will allow you to learn as you go and experience new people along the way. Look at things from a different perspective. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You must keep the momentum going if you don't want to fall short of your goals or have someone steal your ideas. Protect your future plans by proceeding with them quickly instead of sharing. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Put your heart into what you do and you will make financial gains. Love is on the rise but, if you try to two-time or lead someone on, you will end up paying the price. Put travel plans on hold. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You won't have to think much regarding a deal or project you are working on. The contacts you have will be more than happy to lay things out for you to view. Appreciate the effort made but don't get involved unless you see the potential for success. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You may be called upon to do something for a worthy cause. By getting involved in something humanitarian, you will be among some stellar individuals who can influence your future. Love will take a positive turn. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't let your anxiety cause you to make unnecessary alterations. Leave well enough alone and you will be able to spend more time on things that really matter like home, family and making amends with anyone you've neglected lately. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are caring, loyal, strong-willed and emotional. You are entrepreneurial, inventive and an excellent leader.

EUGENIA LAST

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		8	3					
		9		2				
		4			7			
		1				9		
		2	8	7	3	6	1	
4				6				
2		6	1	3	4	5	7	9
	9							3
		7	5	9	6	2	8	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 6/18

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	4	6	8	1	3	2	7	9
3	7	2	6	9	5	8	4	1
1	8	9	4	7	2	3	5	6
6	9	3	5	2	4	1	8	7
7	2	5	1	6	8	4	9	3
4	1	8	9	3	7	6	2	5
9	3	4	7	8	6	5	1	2
8	6	7	2	5	1	9	3	4
2	5	1	3	4	9	7	6	8

Difficulty Level ★★ 6/17

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

FRENCH PEDICURES **Solution: 9 letters**

T	G	E	S	S	T	C	C	Y	X	A	L	E	R	S
S	R	N	C	E	T	R	A	L	A	V	O	M	E	R
T	O	A	I	R	L	Y	E	R	E	X	F	P	P	E
C	O	A	D	H	E	O	L	A	E	A	A	E	A	Z
U	M	N	K	I	T	A	S	E	T	R	R	A	R	I
D	I	O	B	I	T	O	M	P	A	M	B	C	C	R
O	N	L	U	N	N	I	O	T	R	B	E	H	S	U
R	G	A	R	O	O	G	O	S	O	K	A	N	S	T
P	(N)	S	C	I	E	R	T	N	M	O	U	S	T	S
A	S	(A)	S	T	S	L	H	I	A	O	T	T	E	I
M	S	H	(I)	O	P	A	I	N	T	L	Y	R	A	O
P	A	H	I	(L)	L	F	I	N	I	S	H	I	D	M
E	W	T	O	N	A	G	E	K	C	I	P	P	Y	E
R	F	I	L	E	E	H	S	E	L	C	I	T	U	C
G	U	I	D	E	S	K	I	N	T	R	E	N	D	S

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Yesterday's Answer: Kinzcash

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Celtics back in Boston with 2 chances at NBA title

BOSTON (AP)—The Boston Celtics are home, not home free. Unable to put the finishing touches on the Los Angeles Lakers and wrap up their first championship since 1986, the NBA's best team since November flew back across three time zones Monday for a Game 6 they were hoping they wouldn't have to play.

But injuries, another big first-half deficit and a sub-par performance by center Kevin Garnett cost the banged-up Celtics, who lost 103-98 on Sunday in Game 5 at Los Angeles and left Staples Center kicking themselves at the missed opportunity.

"Not what we wanted," coach Doc Rivers said of the team's stay in Southern California. "We wanted two more (wins). Obviously, the blanket was that we get to go home, but we really believed that we could win one of these games. We won one and we'll take it, but that's obviously not what we want."

The Celtics weren't at full strength for Game 5, missing center Kendrick Perkins with a shoulder injury. Whether he'll play in Game 6 will be a game-time decision, but Boston expects to have shooting guard Ray Allen available.

He left the arena immediately following Sunday's game because of a "health issue" with his toddler son, Walker, who underwent medical tests Sunday and Monday. Allen was still at the hospital when the rest of the Celtics arrived in Boston at about 10:30 p.m. EDT Monday, team spokesman Jeff Twiss told The Associated Press.

Allen planned to take an overnight flight so he could play Tuesday night, according to Twiss.

AP

Boston Celtics forward Paul Pierce (34) reacts as Ray Allen, right, is called for his fifth foul against the Los Angeles Lakers in the second half of Game 5 of the NBA basketball finals Sunday, June 15, 2008, in Los Angeles.

The Larry O'Brien Trophy, given each year to the league's top team, was nearly Boston's on Sunday night in Los Angeles. At one point, it appeared to be on its way to the floor for an awards ceremony now on hold. Instead of being hoisted by the Celtics, it was hauled off to LAX and loaded into a jet's cargo hold for the six-hour flight to New England.

Despite the loss, the tradition-drenched Celtics feel good about their chances of winning a 17th title—on the 17th.

"We're one up, with two games to go at home," said Paul Pierce, who scored 38 in Game 5. "It still feels like we have the advantage, and I do feel like we're the better team."

So the 11th installment of Celtics vs. Lakers, the league's signature rivalry and one of the best in pro sports, has at least one more 48-minute episode.

After a 21-year gap between finals meetings, these teams aren't quite ready to part company.

Why would they?

Now five games old, this series has had plenty of drama (Pierce's return from a Game 1 knee injury), history (Boston's finals record 24-point comeback in Game 4), surprises (Leon Powe's emergence as a Game 2 star) and even a little scandal as former referee Tim Donaghy's allegations of fixed playoff games has hung over the finals like a layer of L.A. smog.

The Lakers are trying to become the first team in finals history to overcome a 3-1 deficit to win a title, and they're one step closer. If they can win Game 6 on Tuesday night in TD Banknorth Garden, they'll force a decisive Game 7 to cap a season as trying as any in commissioner David Stern's career.

Kobe Bryant and his teammates staved off elimination Sunday by getting more physical with the Celtics, who Tuesday night will play their 26th game of this postseason—a record—and could be wearing down physically.

Los Angeles center Pau Gasol shed his "soft" label for a night and scored 19 points with 13 rebounds, banging his way inside against Garnett, the league's best defender who couldn't push back at the Spaniard while hampered with fouls.

"Pau was terrific," said Bryant, who set the tone early with 15 first-half points and finished with 25 on 8-of-21 shooting. "He was aggressive. At both ends of the floor he did a great job."

Garnett was disgusted by his game and Boston's big man vowed to make amends when the Celtics get back inside their rowdy house on Causeway Street, where Boston's fans arrive early, party late and treat visitors with little regard.

Lakers, you've been warned.

"It's going to be like coming into the Amazon, into the jungle," he said. "I look forward to coming home and playing."

Following the teams' first across-the-U.S.A. trek of the series, Game 3 was one of the sloppiest finals games in recent memory as the Lakers and Celtics battled jet lag and season-ending fatigue.

With just one day off in the highly debated 2-3-2 format, Boston coach Doc Rivers expects Game 6 to be a struggle.

"It's a terrible turnaround," he said. "It's as tough as you can have. I think going West to East is tougher. Sleep patterns are messed up. It's a tough one. There's no way around it. But both teams have the same issue, so it could come down to a game of mental toughness, who fights the fatigue mentally better than the other group."

But Boston is comforted by being at home, where they are 12-1 in the postseason, where the parquet-patterned floor soothes any nerves and where the 16 championship banners hanging overhead link the Celtics to their past and remind them of their goal.

"That," Rivers said, "'is not a bad place to be."

Signs good for Celtics' Allen to play in Game

BOSTON (AP)—The Celtics expect Ray Allen to play when they try for a second time to win the NBA championship. Kendrick Perkins? Now that's a different story.

Allen rushed from Staples Center after the Los Angeles Lakers' 103-98 win Sunday night that forced a sixth game Tuesday night in Boston. The reason: "health issues" involving one of his three children.

Perkins watched Game 5 from the bench with a shoulder injury. His availability for Game 6 will be a game-time decision.

As the Celtics waited at LA International Airport on Monday afternoon for their delayed flight to leave, team spokesman Jeff Twiss said he expected Allen to take a later airplane to Boston. And, Twiss said, "I don't believe" Allen will miss the game that could bring him his first NBA title in a 12-year career as a deadeye shooter and give the Celtics their first championship in 22 years.

Allen has two sons and a daughter. Some of the players' family members made the journey to Los Angeles for Games 3, 4 and 5.

The Celtics gave no details, only issuing a statement from coach Doc Rivers that "Ray Allen was forced to leave Staples Center at the conclusion of tonight's game due to a health issue with one of his children."

Allen has been a solid contributor in the NBA Finals—second on the Celtics with 19.2 points and 5.2 rebounds per game—after struggling with his shooting in earlier rounds.

Perkins' presence also has been very important—as shown by his absence in the game that cut Boston's lead in the series to 3-2.

The Celtics' 280-pound center was wearing street clothes when Lakers guard Jordan Farmar ventured into the key and sank two fourth-quarter layups Sunday night. Perkins could only watch from the bench while Pau Gasol yanked down 13 rebounds.

His strained left shoulder kept him from clogging the middle and convincing opponents they might be better off to stay away.

"It probably hurt us, obviously," Boston coach Doc Rivers. "Whenever you lose, the guy that was hurt or the guy that didn't play becomes very valuable."

Perkins status isn't the only question mark for a team with concerns at other starting spots.

Kevin Garnett said he "played like garbage" in Game 5. Allen's state of mind may be an issue. Rajon Rondo "is just not playing well" even though the ankle he hurt in the series is fine, Rivers said. And Paul Pierce sprained his knee in the series opener.

Still, Pierce has played brilliantly on offense and defense and should continue that when he's back before the ear-splitting cheers of a full house of home fans. Unfortunately for the Celtics, Perkins may be just one of them.

"Perk is a physical guy," Garnett said. "He plays the post better than anybody in this league. That's what he does. When you lose a key guy, you're losing something."

Until this season, his fifth in the NBA, the 23-year-old Perkins was one of several developing youngsters on a struggling team. Then the Celtics traded most of those youngsters before this season for Garnett and Allen. That solidified Perkins' role—the bruiser to go along with All-Stars Garnett, Allen, Pierce and speedy point guard Rondo.

Pierce, Garnett and Allen are The Big Three. Perkins is The Biggest One, at least in terms of space taken up.

"We're used to playing with numerous (different) guys on the court," Pierce said. "We do it all the time in practice with our lineups, so I don't think that's something that's surprising to me. But, at the same time, we have Kendrick Perkins hurt, so that kind of changes things on the rotation side."

Without Perkins, Garnett guarded Gasol and ran into foul trouble. Lamar Odom had an outstanding game—20 points, 11 rebounds and four blocks—without being hounded by Garnett most of the times he touched the ball.

The Celtics started Leon Powe in place of Perkins, who is 40 pounds heavier and at least two inches taller. Powe played the first 4:59, was replaced by P.J. Brown with Boston trailing 14-5 and never returned.

"We have to start Leon, and P.J. Brown is getting a lot of minutes," Pierce said. "Rajon is suffering from a sprained ankle. So Doc is doing the best he can with the ailments we have on this team."

Rivers could beef up his defense by using 289-pound rookie forward Glen Davis, who hasn't played in the series.

"It hurt not having Perkins out there and with Kevin suffering from foul trouble," Pierce said. "They took advantage of that with Pau and Lamar, so definitely they were aggressive. ... But I know we'll bounce back. Hopefully, we can get Perkins back. If we can keep Kevin out of foul trouble, I think we'll be fine."

Howard, Hamels lead Phillies past Red Sox

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Ryan Howard homered twice and Jimmy Rollins also connected to back another strong outing by Cole Hamels, helping the Philadelphia Phillies beat the Boston Red Sox 8-2 Monday in an interleague matchup of division leaders.

Hamels (7-4) allowed two runs and seven hits in seven-plus innings. Since consecutive poor outings last month, the left-hander has a 1.50 ERA in his last three starts.

Dustin Pedroia and J.D. Drew hit consecutive homers for Boston.

Red Sox starter Bartolo Colon (4-2) gave up four runs and six hits in four innings before leaving with back stiffness.

Howard had his second multihomer game in four nights and finished 3-for-5 with a triple and four RBIs.

AP

Philadelphia Phillies' Ryan Howard follows the ball as he hits a two-run home run in the first inning of a baseball game against the Boston Red Sox, Monday, June 16, 2008, in Philadelphia.

Braves 7, Rockies 1

At Denver, Chipper Jones hit a two-run single in the fifth to break a scoreless tie, Jair Jurrjens pitched into the eighth inning without allowing a run and Atlanta beat Colorado in a National League game.

The contest was a makeup from a game that was snowed out on April 10.

Jones, mired in a 2-for-15 slump entering the game, finished 2-for-4 with a walk, raising his average a point to .403.

Jeff Francoeur had a two-run double in the seventh and Brandon Jones added a two-run single in the ninth.

Jurrjens (7-3) leads major league rookies in wins. He struck out seven and allowed eight hits in a career-high 7 2-3 innings.

Marlins 6, Mariners 1

At Seattle, Andrew allowed one run and six hits over seven innings for Florida over Seattle.

Just hours after Seattle fired Bill Bavasi, in his fifth season as the team's general manager, the Mariners lost their eighth straight at home, their longest home losing streak in nearly 12 years.

Luis Gonzalez drove in two runs for the Marlins and Dan Uggla, Jeremy Hermida and Hanley Ramirez all had two hits for Florida, which lost two of three to Tampa Bay over the weekend.

Seattle starter Carlos Silva (3-8) gave up two runs in the first. He was ejected with two outs in the fifth for arguing a call at first base.

Giants 8, Tigers 6

At San Francisco, John Bowker hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the eighth inning to spoil Fernando Rodney's season debut, and San Francisco won its first interleague game in seven tries this year.

Marcus Thames homered twice and drove in three runs for the Tigers, who had their season-best six-game winning streak snapped.

Bowker was the first batter faced by Rodney after he relieved Freddy Dolsi (0-2) with two on. The Tigers activated Rodney from the disabled list earlier Monday after the setup man had missed the entire season with shoulder problems.

Keiichi Yabu (3-3) pitched the eighth for the win. Fred Lewis homered and added a two-run double in the eighth. Curtis Granderson had a two-run single for Detroit in the ninth.

Thames had his sixth multihomer game and second this season, the other on May 28 at the Los Angeles Angels. The homers were just the fourth and fifth allowed by Giants starter Tim Lincecum this season.

Mets 9, Angels 6

At Anaheim, California, Carlos Beltran homered twice for New York and Mike Pelfrey won for the first time in 11 starts.

Pelfrey (3-6) allowed six runs, eight hits and two walks in six-plus innings and did not strike out a batter in his first regular-season start against an AL team.

The right-hander, coming off three consecutive no-decisions following six straight defeats, won for the first time since beating Washington 6-0 on April 15 at Shea Stadium.

The Mets scored in each of the first three innings against Jered Weaver (6-7), who allowed six runs and eight hits over 6 1-3 innings, striking out five.

The Angels made it 8-6 with three runs in the seventh before Aaron Heilman struck out Vladimir Guerrero and Torii Hunter with the potential tying runs on base.

Billy Wagner got three outs for his 15th save in 20 chances and second in two days after blowing three consecutive opportunities.

Seattle says a deal's a deal; Sonics should stay

SEATTLE (AP)—A deal is a deal, and the SuperSonics should stay. That was the message from city of Seattle lawyers as a federal trial began Monday to determine whether the NBA franchise will be forced to stay at KeyArena until its lease expires in 2010.

SuperSonics owner Clay Bennett is trying to move the team—Seattle's oldest professional sports franchise—to his hometown of Oklahoma City, two years before the lease expires. Bennett, who sat expressionless at the defense table, is hoping to pay Seattle no more than $10 million in lost rent for the next two seasons.

Bennett was expected to be the second witness on Tuesday.

In his opening statement, Seattle lawyer Paul Lawrence said the city only agreed in the mid-1990s to spend $84 million to renovate the old Seattle Coliseum—now KeyArena—because the team agreed to stay until 2010. He told U.S. District Judge Marsha Pechman the city has every right to hold the Sonics to that bargain, and asked her to force them to stay.

Bennett knew full well the Sonics had been losing money at KeyArena and assumed that risk when his group bought the team for $350 million in 2006, Lawrence said.

"These are all sophisticated businessmen who know what it means to sign and assume a contract," he said. "They can afford the losses they knew were coming."

The opening presentation included photos of Sonics banners hanging from the rafters and excerpts from e-mails in which Bennett and other owners discussed their eagerness to move the team soon after buying it. Lawrence said the economic, cultural and charitable benefits the Sonics bring to Seattle are unique, hard to quantify and not something that can be simply paid off.

As court adjourned Monday, about 1,000 fans rallied outside the courthouse, waving signs and Sonics flags and chanting "Save our Sonics." They cheered Lawrence as he left the building but courthouse security let Bennett avoid the crowd through a different exit.

Typically, courts are reluctant to force parties to fulfill contract obligations against their will. Instead, they require monetary damages to make the injured party whole. But the Sonics lease specifically states that either side can force the other to fulfill its obligations.

Forcing the Sonics to honor the lease would give the city two additional years to potentially reach a deal for a new arena, Lawrence said. He noted the NBA's approval to move the team is only good for one year.

"A lot can happen in two years," he said.

Sonics attorney Brad Keller began his opening statement by saying there were two key tenets to the Sonics lease: One, that they would play their home games at KeyArena for 15 years; and two, that the city would provide an "economically feasible" venue. Nowadays, KeyArena is "terrible," economically and physically, compared to other arenas in the league, he said.

The Sonics insist they would lose up to $65 million over the next two years in Seattle, but would make an estimated $18.8 million in the same period if allowed to move, because there's a better venue in Oklahoma City.

The 1994 lease agreement that was supposed to be a win-win for Seattle and the team has become a lose-lose, Keller said, and forcing the team to stay would be like forcing an estranged husband and wife to share the same roof.

"Like many relationships do, this relationship broke down," Keller said.

He said the Sonics spent millions of dollars working with lawmakers to get a deal for a new arena, to no avail, and suggested the Legislature's reluctance is an indicator of the state's indifference to the team. The city says the team's demands for a $500 million venue were unreasonable.

KeyArena "hasn't been a competitive NBA arena for many, many years," Keller said.

Keller also alleged the city's real intent in bringing the lawsuit is to bleed the Professional Basketball Club in hopes it will sell to a local group. He cited a PowerPoint slide that former Sen. Slade Gorton, a lawyer hired by the city, displayed during a strategic meeting at the home of former Sonics chief executive Wally Walker. The slide said the role of Gorton and others would be to "increase pain" of trying to leave.

Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels was the first witness to testify. He said $35 million remains to be paid on the principal from KeyArena's renovation.

Former Pats LB Rosevelt Colvin signs with Texans

HOUSTON (AP)—Free agent linebacker Rosevelt Colvin signed with the Houston Texans on Monday, giving the team another pass rusher to pair with 2006 No. 1 draft pick Mario Williams.

Colvin spent five years with the Patriots and was a member of two Super Bowl winning teams, but was released by New England in February. He missed the last five regular season games and the playoffs with a foot injury.

Williams' 14 sacks last season tied for third in the NFL, but the Texans didn't get much pressure on the quarterback outside his work.

"My passion is rushing the passer," Colvin said. "It's something I feel like I do well."

The 30-year-old had 52 1/2 sacks in nine seasons with the Patriots and the Bears. The Texans have discussed the possibility of using him at defensive end as well as linebacker.

"I feel like I'm versatile enough to play a couple of different positions. So whether or not I'll be playing offensive line or quarterback, defensive end or linebacker, it remains to be seen," he joked. "As we try to go forward from here, the most important thing is that I remain healthy. I'll try to get my role and what that's going to be."

The 6-foot-3, 250-pound Colvin said he is healthy and glad to have a team to work with after being unemployed for almost four months. He hasn't had a chance to get in touch with any of his new defensive teammates, but has chatted with receiver Andre' Davis, with whom he played in New England.

Colvin's agent Kennard McGuire would not release terms of the deal, but when asked if it was a multiyear contract he said: "I think that you're going to see Rosevelt Colvin here for an extended period."

He signed with the Patriots in 2003 after back-to-back career highs of 10 1/2 sacks with Chicago, but his first season in New England ended after just two games because of a hip injury. He returned to play three full regular seasons for the Patriots before last year's injury.

Colvin joins a defense that features Williams as well as first-round picks Amobi Okoye and Travis Johnson on the line and 2006 Defensive Rookie of the Year, linebacker DeMeco Ryans. He said the opportunity to start over with a young defense is exciting for him.

"New faces. New situations. New team. Hopefully same old Rosey, which is a guy that goes out works hard and does everything he can to make plays and win games," Colvin said. "Sort of the icing on the cake is the young guys that they have, that they've been able to develop the last couple of years on the defensive side of the ball."

The signing reunites him with Texans general manager Rick Smith, who recruited him out of high school to play at Purdue. He said Smith had to work a bit harder to get him this time.

"A little more convincing had to come this time around, because I'm 30 years old," said Colvin, who is married and has four children. "I'm at a point in my life where there are other priorities. Back then, it was just me I had to worry about."

Helterbrand's heroics lead Ginebra past Coca-Cola

MANILA, Philippines—Jayjay Helterbrand must have been so glad to finally have his backcourt partner back. So much so that the other half of the famous "The Fast and The Furious" combo made sure Mark Caguioa's return to action would be a memorable one by coming up with two big plays in the endgame that enabled Barangay Ginebra to hurdle tough Coca-Cola, 91-84, Sunday night in the Smart PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Helterbrand drained a clutch triple that gave the Kings an 89-80 lead and followed that up a few seconds later with a fastbreak layup off his own steal that totally quashed whatever hopes the Tigers may have had of salvaging the game.

Those heroics gave Ginebra an unassailable 91-84 lead and capped a sterling all-around performance by the wily point guard, further stoking Ginebra's determined charge for a playoff spot.

"He has become a better all-around player now," said Kings coach Jong Uichico, referring to his ace point guard who finished with a game-high 27 points aside from four rebounds and three assists. "We all know he's a very good offensive player, but he's also been playing defense very well now. So he's getting to a different level by adding assists and defensive aspects to his game."

Chris Alexander's game-high 22 rebounds went well with his 13 points, five blocks and excellent defense on Coke counterpart Jason Dixon, while Caguioa returned from a bout with tendinitis that caused him to miss three games to score 14 points.

Uichico also gave special mention to Caguioa.

"Humiling lang ako sa kanya ng a few minutes, para dumali ang rotation. Pinagbigyan naman niya ako sa request ko, even though his knee was still hurting," bared Uichico of Caguioa who played with his right knee all wrapped.

Barangay Ginebra 91 – Helterbrand 27, Caguioa 14, Alexander 13, Valenzuela 11, Tubid 8, Menk 8, Artadi 4, Mamaril 4, Crisano 2.

Coca-Cola 84 – Copeland 18, Catli 18, Belasco 18, Cabagnot 17, Dixon 7, Buenafe 3, Talulava 3, Macapagal 0, Dimaunahan 0, Telan 0.

Quarterscores: 23-24, 51-41, 71-60, 91-84.

(www.pba.com.ph)

WOODS

From Page 28

slid by on the left.

Mediate struggled to keep his emotions after taking bogey on the first extra hole, but he walked off Torrey Pines with 12,000 new friends who crammed both sides of every fairway for a playoff that was tighter than anyone imagined.

"Obviously, I would have loved to win," he said. "I don't know what else to say. They wanted a show, they got one."

Did they ever.

From the opening tee shot Thursday in a light fog known as "June Gloom," this U.S. Open simply shined.

"This is probably the greatest tournament I've ever had," Woods said.

It was filled with some of his greatest moments—a 30 on the back nine Friday to get into the mix, two eagles from a combined 100 feet and a chip-in birdie on Saturday to take the lead, and one of the biggest putts of his career when he holed a 12-foot birdie with the final stroke of regulation to force the playoff.

Then came a playoff in which he built a three-shot lead with eight holes to play, only to find himself trailing four holes later.

Next up for Woods? Even he isn't sure after hobbling around on a knee that clearly hasn't healed.

"I'm going to shut it down for a while," Woods said. He answered "maybe" when asked if he thought he made it worse by playing the Open, and he said he didn't know if he would play the British Open at Royal Birkdale next month.

He nearly shut down too early. Woods seized control when Mediate bogeyed consecutive holes around the turn, but Woods bogeyed the next two from the bunker and Mediate tied him by nearly driving the 267-yard 14th hole and chipping to a foot for birdie. Then the playoff took yet another surprising turn on the 15th.

Woods hit his tee shot so far to the right that it landed in a fairway bunker along the adjoining ninth fairway. But he carved a sand shot around the trees to 12 feet, one of those defining shots that turns a tournament in his favor.

But that didn't happen.

Mediate dropped in a 25-foot birdie putt, while Woods missed and spent the next three holes in a desperate chase to make up ground. Woods finally caught him on the last hole, reaching the green in two and two-putting from 45 feet.

"I never quit. I never quit," Mediate said. "I've been beaten down a few times and came back, and I got what I wanted. I got a chance to beat the best player in the world. And I came up just a touch short."

Woods moved within four of the record 18 professional majors that Nicklaus won. And it was the second time he has won a PGA Tour event and a U.S. Open on the same course—Pebble Beach (2000) and Torrey Pines.

He won the Buick Invitational by a tournament-record eight shots in January, but that was before he had surgery to clean out cartilage in his left knee, before he wasn't sure if pain would shoot down his leg with every swing.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this victory? Woods had four three-putts and four double bogeys, and he still won.

It was his 65th career victory, passing Ben Hogan for third all-time, raised his playoff record to 15-2 and made it 14-of-14 in majors when he had at least a share of the lead going into the final round.

He now has won every major in a playoff except for the British Open.

Just like the last U.S. Open playoff seven years ago, both players arrived wearing the same outfit—khaki trousers and a white shirt at Southern Hills, black slacks and a red shirt with a black vest at Torrey Pines.

That's typical for Woods, and when he saw Mediate, Woods removed his vest.

It felt like a prize fight the way both players marched through a wall of fans and onto the first tee, posing before the silver U.S. Open trophy. And it finished that way, too.

"With everybody in the world all looking in, and everyone expecting me to get my (behind) handed to me, and I didn't," Mediate said. "And I almost got it done. I almost got it done."

Woods raised his arms like a heavyweight champion walking off the first tee, but only because he found the fairway for the first time all week. Mediate flipped his club to the front of the tee box when he came within inches of an ace on the par-3 third.

Back and forth they went, Woods building an early lead with consecutive birdies, Mediate refusing to go away. But when Mediate three-putted from 15 feet for bogey on the ninth, and Woods holed a 20-foot par putt from the fringe on the next hole to go three shots ahead, it looked as though this playoff would turn into another snoozer.

Then it was Woods who faltered, and Mediate caught a second wind. It set up a fabulous finish, just like everything else this week on the public course in the tony hamlet of La Jolla that translates to "The Jewel."

"It was just unreal," Woods said. "It was back and forth, back and forth. And 90 holes wasn't enough."

TORGESON

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the water after the 44-year-old ironman from Japan finished the swim in 27:15. Torgeson had a lot of catching up to do after emerging from the surf in 31:25.

But he made up for it in his specialty, closing in with a time of 1:15:33 in the bike portion as against Miyazuka's 1:18:33 to come within 10 seconds of the Japanese's lead.

Torgeson eventually passed Miyazuka early in the run, which he negotiated in 40:21 to beat the former to the finish line by close to three minutes. Miyazuka timed in at 2:20:14 after completing the run in 44:17.

Tinian transplant Ken Halliday, meanwhile, made the locals proud by coming in third in the event, tearing the tape in 2:42:06.

Saipan's Tyce Mister and Lewie Tenorio complete the Top 5 in the multi-sport event, arriving at the finish line in 2:50:49 and 2:53:50, respectively.

For the women, Japan's Eiko Moriya and Yoko Mineo finished 1-2 for the Land of the Rising Sun, completing the race in 3:14:14 and 3:25:29, respectively.

Saipan's Kimiko Hasegawa almost beat Mineo to the finish line, coming in three seconds off the runner-up's pace with a time of 3:25:32.

Kanae Quinn came in fourth (3:30:52), while Keiko Nakakarumai came in fifth, clocking in at 3:42:49.

The 2008 edition of the Tinian Turquoise Blue Triathlon attracted a total of 36 participants with ages ranging from 20-year-old Joshua Manglona of Tinian to 64-year-old Kazumi Mineo of Japan.

The annual triathlon is supported by the Tinian Mayor's Office, KFC Triathlon Club of Japan, Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino, and the Marianas Visitors Authority.

In the Reef Swim, Japanese finished 1-2-3 in all three categories of the event. Yoshinori Iwasa topped the 4.5-kilometer swim in 1:25:49, followed by Atsushi Hashimoto (1:28:16) and Hiroshi Osumi (1:28:19).

The 3-kilometer race was won by a female swimmer as Akiko Yamamoto reached the shore in 53:06. Satoru Seto came in second in 53:12, while another woman, Noroko Nagashima took third in a time of 55:28.

Ayaka Tsukanishi, meanwhile, was first on the 1.5-kilometer swim, emerging from the surf in 26:06. She was followed by Takashi Yamazaki (28:08) and Syoji Yamashita (31:21).

SIX

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slate in Pool B after yesterday's wins over Arlie Bonto of Guam (6-2, 6-0) and Abigail Gbewonyo of Palau (6-1, 6-3).

The CNMI is also doing well in the boys' 13, led by undefeated Rafael Jones and Jake Lee, who both finished the round-robin draw on top of their respective pools with 3-0 win-loss cards.

Jones followed up his two wins Monday by beating Guam's Jared Lee yesterday, 6-1, 6-1, in Pool A; while Jake Lee clinched the top seed in Pool B with a tough 6-4, 6-4 victory over Guam's Cory Morrison.

Thea Minor, for her part, is simply unbeatable in the girls' 13s after demolishing Guam's Ashley Nadler, 6-0, 6-0. She had her streak of shutout wins, however, snapped when she "only" won 6-1, 6-0 against Alina Bonto of Guam.

In other results, James Camacho and Woo Suk Cang absorbed their only losses so far in the boys' 18s Pool A after both succumbed to Guam's much-improved Michael Tan.

Camacho lost to Tan, 2-6, 6-7; while Chang came out on the shorter end of the stick in his outing against the Guamanian, losing in a tough three-setter, 0-6, 6-4, 6-2.

Russell Buenaventura, meanwhile, lost his first match in Pool B when Koo beat him 7-6, 4-6,4-6.

In the girls' 18s, Theecel Minor finally won a match when she beat Bonto, 6-1, 6-1. Federated States of Micronesia's Samantha Arthur earlier gave Minor her third loss, 6-7, 6-0, 3-6.

Dan Camacho, for his part, finished the eliminations in the boys' 13s with a 2-1 record after winning his game against FSM's Jake Panuelo, 6-1, 6-0.

In the girls' 13s, Amy Arenovski won both her matches yesterday beating Danielle Adams of FSM and Camdyn Nadler of Guam in scores of 6-0, 6-0 and 6-2, 6-1, respectively. She currently sports a 3-1 record.

Jean Bracken, meanwhile, continued her initiation to the NPQ by dropping two more games yesterday. She lost to FSM's Amanda Hawkins (3-6, 4-6) and Palau's Ayana Rengiil (1-6, 4-6).

BANK

From Page 28

third frame, the Bankers took control of the game and entered the fourth and final quarter ahead, 68-64.

From there, it was just a matter of fending off a number of comeback attempts by Tinian.

Taisacan and Peters made sure no such rally would succeed as the two combined for 17 of the team's 27 points in the payoff period to tow BoG to the eight-point victory.

Peters led five Bankers in double figures with 21 points, while Pelisamen and Taisacan added 17 and 14, respectively.

Tinian, which dropped to 2-3 in the win-loss standings, was paced by the game-high 29 markers of Santos. Borja and Manglona chipped in 24 and 17 points in the loss.

Bank of Guam 95 – Peters 21, Pelisamen 19, Taisacan 17, Lee 14, G. Palacios 11, D. Palacios 9, Imperial 4.

Tinian 83 – Santos 29, Borja 24, Manglona 17, Stole 6, San Nicolas 3, Aquiningoc 3, Morgan 2.

Scoring by quarters: 12-17, 38-43, 68-64, 95-83.

Referees: Noel Delos Santos and Gilbert Espinosa.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	44	29	.603	–
Tampa Bay	40	29	.580	2
New York	37	33	.529	5 1/2
Baltimore	34	34	.500	7 1/2
Toronto	35	36	.493	8

Central Division

Chicago	38	31	.551	–
Minnesota	34	36	.486	4 1/2
Cleveland	33	37	.471	5 1/2
Detroit	32	38	.457	6 1/2
Kansas City	28	42	.400	10 1/2

West Division

Los Angeles	42	29	.592	–
Oakland	38	31	.551	3
Texas	35	36	.493	7
Seattle	24	46	.343	17 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Philadelphia	42	30	.583	–
Florida	38	32	.543	3
Atlanta	35	36	.493	6 1/2
New York	34	35	.493	6 1/2
Washington	29	42	.408	12 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	45	25	.643	–
St. Louis	42	29	.592	3 1/2
Milwaukee	36	33	.522	8 1/2
Pittsburgh	34	36	.486	11
Houston	33	37	.471	12
Cincinnati	33	38	.465	12 1/2

West Division

Arizona	37	33	.529	–
Los Angeles	31	38	.449	5 1/2
San Diego	31	40	.437	6 1/2
San Francisco	31	40	.437	6 1/2
Colorado	28	42	.400	9

Yesterday's Games

Philadelphia 8, Boston 2
Atlanta 7, Colorado 1
N.Y. Mets 9, L.A. Angels 6
Florida 6, Seattle 1
San Francisco 8, Detroit 6

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

Govt Basketball Standings

PTI	1	0
BOG	4	1
DCCA	3	1
DOC	2	1
Autonomous	2	1
NMC	1	1
Aguaguat	1	1
Tinian	2	3
Legislature	1	3
DPS	0	3
DPW	0	3
CPA	0	0

Tenorio wins ladies tournament for June

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Margaret Tenorio won the CNMI Women's Golf Association June Ace of the Month Tournament after firing a net score of 70 last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort west course.

Tenorio won the sixth monthly tournament of CWGA after her gross score of 101 was sliced by her 31 USGA handicap. She shot a 51 in the front nine before improving by a stroke in the back with a 50.

Chang Eun Ae finished runner-up for June with her 71 net on the strength of her 24 handicap following a gross score of 95 (47-48).

Yang Kyung A came in third after firing a 72 net. The 23-handicapper shot a 52-43 in the front and back for a gross score of 95.

Shiori Onoue and Bobbie Guerrero complete the Top 5 with identical net scores of 73. Onoue fired her's after a gross of 80 (41-39), while Guerrero managed a one-over net score after recording a pre-handicap score of 88 (47-41).

Onoue edged Guerrero via score-card tiebreak

Shirlyn Jones (net 74), Ching Lin Wang (75), Ham Young Mi (75), Lou Kim (76), Park Kim Yang (77), Aya Matsumoto (77), Terry Tudela (78), Kimiko Abe (78), Noriko Togawa (80), ok Soon Kim (82), Sadiko Adachi (83), Yuko Togawa (85), Lorraine Babauta (85), Bennet Seman (89), and Doll Yamagishi (93) also took part in the June Ace for CWGA.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
A total of 20 lady golfers took part in the CNMI Women's Golf Association June Ace of the Month Tournament held last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort west course.

Established in March 2007, CWGA is a nonprofit organization founded to promote, encourage, and introduce women to the sport of golf in the CNMI.

The organization intends to accomplish the following: 1. Promote civic and community interest in golf; 2. Establish and encourage competition and good sportsmanship; 3. Promote and provide social functions of the members and their families; 4. Promote youth golf activities; and 5. To do any or all things necessary and proper to accomplish its purpose and intention.

CWGA also commits its members to abide by a set of values that will further enrich a golfer's performance, attitude, and conduct-adopted form the USA Junior Golf Association.

The set of values members of CWGA are committed to faithfully are as follows: perseverance; sportsmanship; respect; honesty; judgment; responsibility; reliance; courtesy; and sincerity.

40 sign up for Manny to Maui Bike Race

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Manny to Maui Bike Race is confirmed for June 29 with as many as 40 bikers already signifying their participation in the fundraiser for veteran triathlete Manny Sitchon's trip to the 2008 XTERRA World Championships in Hawaii.

Race time is set at 6:30pm with registration starting at 5:45am. The entry is $20 and entitles participants to a cycling jersey and a ticket to the raffle following the event.

The 35-mile road bike race will start at the Hyatt Regency Saipan parking lot, with bikers proceeding to Suicide Cliff, Bird Island Lookout, and Banzai Cliff before heading back to the American Memorial Park.

The 25-mile mountain bike, for its part, will also start at the Hyatt before participants cycle to the Last Command Post and venture into off-road country beginning at the Marpi Landfill, Banzai Trail Boonies, Banzai Cliff, before going back to the Micro Beach Pavillion.

Sitchon said he would like to thank the following companies for helping him stage the Manny to Maui Bike Race: JG Group of Companies, KFC/Taco Bell, Micronesian Brokers, Inc., Island Business Systems and Supplies, Aquarius Beach Tower and Hotel, Pacific Islands Club, Marianas Pacific Distributors, PTI, Coca-Cola Beverage Co. Inc., Saipan Grand Hotel, Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan, *Saipan Tribune*, MDX Radio Communications Group, *Marianas Variety*, Palms Resort Saipan, and DPS Traffic Division.

MARK RABAGO
Manny Sitchon, the 7th XTERRA Saipan Championship 50-54 division winner, poses at the American Memorial Park following last month's Inaugural Ayuda Charity Mountain Bike Race.

Sitchon said he is organizing the Manny to Maui Bike Race to help defray the costs of transportation and hotel accommodation during his stint in the 2008 XTERRA World Championships set for Oct. 26.

The XTERRA World Championship is limited to top 500 qualifiers from different XTERRA triathlon series of races, including the XTERRA Saipan Championship, considered the jewel of the XTERRA global tour.

The Maui triathlon course is legendary as it combines a 1.5-kilometer swim in the water of the Pacific ocean, 30-km of mountain biking with more than 3,000 feet of climbing up the slopes of Maui's Haleakala Volcano, and an 11-km trail run covering a dozen different surfaces from sand to lava rock.

Sitchon, who works as a service support supervisor at Island Business Systems and Supplies, qualified for the XTERRA World Championships after winning the 50-54 division in the 7th XTERRA Saipan Championship last March 8.

15th Silver Streak this Saturday

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Silver Streak, the fun run that memorializes the late president of DFS Galleria Saipan, returns this Saturday, June 14.

According to DFS Galleria Saipan associate store manager Wolf Mojica the 15th Annual Tom Picarro Memorial Fun Run will have a start time of 6am following a 5am to 5:55am registration time.

"It is that time of the year again when we begin to plan for the 15th Annual Silver Streak. The fun run memorializes our former president Tom Picarro, who served from 1979 to 1992. He used to run along Beach Road waving to passers by. He had a great head of white hair and that is where we got the name Silver Streak," he said.

Wolf said trophies and in-kind prizes will be awarded for the top male and female finishers as well as first, second, and third place in 13 age groups. The fun run will start at the DFS Galleria Saipan's main entrance along Beach Road.

Participants will then head south on Beach Road to the Japanese Tank at the intersection of Quartermaster Road then turn around and finish at DFS Galleria Saipan.

The DFS Galleria Saipan executive added that entry fee is $10 and registration forms are available at the DFS Galleria Customer Information Counter and payments can be made Monday through Friday, 8am-12pm and 1pm-5pm at the finance office.

While proceeds from the Silver Streak will go to a local charity, DFS Galleria Saipan will give away T-shirts and tank tops for the first 175 finishers. Drinks, water, and fruits will also be provided to participants.

For more information about the Silver Streak, call Wolf Mojica at 236-2540 or Marida Pensader at 236-2530.

Last year, 130 runners between the ages of one and 77 years old took part in the Silver Streak.

Track star Nate Mateo and Mamiko Oshima were the most fleet afoot on as the duo captured the men's and women's title with respective times of 26:46 and 28:58.

Among the top males were age division winners Andrew Kimball (5-10), Mathew Mancao (11-20), Jerson Villamor (21-30), Tamio Nishikido (31-40), Sathiya Kalarikkal (41-50), Chang Whan Jang (51-60), Bruce MacMillan (61-70), and ageless wonder John Joyner of the 71-and-over category.

The fastest women age groupers were youngster Soleil Lamar (5-10), Melissa Halaby (11-20), PIC Clubmate Mieko Carey (21-30), triathlete Kimiko Hasegawa (31-40), Irma Halaby (41-50), the unstoppable Monica Yamaguchi (51-60), Aenaida Tydingco (61-70), and Donna White (71-Over).

San Roque golf tourney tee off on June 28

Five flights will up for grabs when the 14th Annual San Roque Golf Tournament tees off on June 28 at the Marianas Country Club Golf Resort in Marpi.

The tournament, which is a fundraiser for the church on the northern part of Saipan, will feature Championships, A, B, C, Ladies, and Seniors flights.

This early organizers have already promised that the tournament will be a fulfilling competition for all that participate.

"This year promises to be a rewarding experience for all golfers as prizes and trophies will be awarded in [all five flights]," a statement from the San Roque Parish Council read.

Money raised from the golf tournament this year will be used for planned improvements to the San Roque Church's social hall.

"The generosity and participation of those who have made this tournament as their pilgrimage for the last 13 years are most welcomed. The San Roque Parish invites those who have not played this event to join this year," the San Roque Parish Council added.

Tee time is set at 12pm with registration set from 10am to 11:30am.

The San Roque Parish Council is also accepting donations in the form of cash or in-kind for prizes. For donations, call Fr. Bong Lopez at 322-2404 or 285-9121, Tony Cabrera at 322-0417, Felix Sasamoto at 322-1889 or any member of the San Roque Parish Council.

Jess "Mr. Unorthodox" Wabol won the 13th Annual San Roque Golf Tournament held in May 27, 2007, at the Marianas Country Club Golf Resort in Marpi.

Wabol took the top plumb despite firing a two-over par 74 following a 34 in the front and a 40 in the back performance.

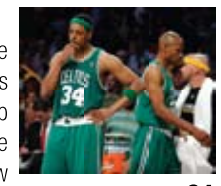
Other winners last year were Rick Kautz of A Flight, Fr. Manny Corcuera of B Flight James N. Babauta of C Flight, Kim Jeong Mi of Ladies Flight, and Joe Sablan of Seniors Flight. ***(Mark Rabago)***

Tenorio wins ladies tournament for June

Margaret Tenorio won the CNMI Women's Golf Association June Ace of the Month Tournament after firing a net score of 70 last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort west course. 27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Celtics back in Boston with 2 chances at NBA title



The Boston Celtics are home, not home free. Unable to put the finishing touches on the Los Angeles Lakers and wrap up their first championship since 1986, the NBA's best team since November flew back across three time zones Monday for a Game 6. 24

Woods outlasts Mediate for third Open

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP GOLF WRITER

With a throbbing knee and a pounding heart, Tiger Woods made one last improbable escape Monday and won the U.S. Open in a 19-hole playoff over Rocco Mediate, his 14th career major and maybe the most amazing of them all.

One shot behind after a collapse no one saw coming, Woods birdied the 18th hole to force sudden death at Torrey Pines against a journeyman with a creaky back who simply wouldn't go away.

But that one extra hole was enough to doom Mediate, trying to become the oldest U.S. Open champion at 45 years, 6 months.

He put his tee shot in the bunker at No. 7, knocked his approach off a cart path and against the bleachers, chipped some 18 feet past the hole and missed the par putt.

On the verge of one of golf's greatest upsets, Mediate instead became another victim.

"Great fight," Woods told him as they embraced on the seventh green.

Woods, who delivered so many spectacular moments over four days along the Pacific bluffs, only needed a two-putt par to win the U.S. Open for the third time, and the first since it last was held on a public course at Bethpage Black in 2002.

It capped a remarkable week for the world's No. 1 player, who had not played since April 15 surgery on his left knee and looked as though every step was a burden. But the knee held up for 91 holes, and the payoff was worth the pain, even if doctors had warned him that he risked further injury by playing the Open.

"I'm glad I'm done," Woods said. "I really don't feel like playing anymore. It's sore."

Woods joins Jack Nicklaus as the only players to capture the career Grand Slam three times over.

Mediate's odyssey began two weeks ago when he had to survive a sudden-death playoff simply to qualify for this U.S. Open. Even more unlikely was going toe-to-toe with Woods—whom Mediate referred to as a "monster"—and nearly slaying him.

He had a 20-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole to win, but it

See WOODS on Page 26

AP

Tiger Woods holds up the championship trophy after winning the US Open against Rocco Mediate, left, after a sudden death hole following an 18-hole playoff round at Torrey Pines Golf Course on Monday, June 16, 2008 in San Diego.

Torgeson tops Tinian Triathlon

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Eli Torgeson won the three-sport race of last Saturday's 9th Annual Tinian Turquoise Blue Triathlon & Reef Swim that started off Taga Beach in the CNMI's gaming capital.

The Commonwealth Health Center anesthesiologist cut three-time Tagaman champion Hideya Miyazuka's lead after the swim by pedaling like there was no tomorrow to top the race in a time of 2:27:19.

Miyazuka was the first out of

See TORGESON on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 9th Annual Tinian Turquoise Blue Triathlon attracted a total of 36 participants from Japan, Saipan, and Tinian. Photo above shows participants in the early part of the swim off Taga Beach.

Six netters still perfect in Guam

By MARK RABAGO
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Six CNMI junior players remained undefeated as the 2008 North Pacific Qualifier entered its second day yesterday at the Rick Ninete Tennis Center in Tamuning, Guam.

Benjie Decena of Tinian followed up his two victories on opening day with wins over teammate Nathan Nutting (6-0, 6-1) and Guam's William Koo (6-2, 6-7, 7-5) in Pool A of the boys' 18s division.

Mayuko Arriola and Dina Jones, meanwhile, are lording it over the field in the girls' 18s. Arriola has a 3-0 record following victories over Marica Otto of Palau (6-1, 6-0) and Guam's Theresa Rice (6-0, 6-0) in Pool A yesterday.

Jones was more impressive, racking up a 4-0

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Bank of Guam overcomes Tinian

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Bank of Guam continued its hot streak by beating Tinian in the resumption of the 2008 PTI Inter-Government Business Basketball League Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Bankers notched win No. 4 as against one loss despite going down early against the cagers from the CNMI's gaming capital.

With Anthony Borja going off early and often, Tinian took a 17-12 lead in the opening 10 minutes of the ballgame.

John Santos and Peter Manglona made sure Tinian continued to have the driver's seat, combining for 21 points in the second to give their team a 43-38 spread at halftime.

BoG, however, had had enough of Tinian seeing them from their rearview mirror.

And with center Charlie Peters and forwards Randy Pelisaman and Jason Taisacan firing at least six points apiece in the

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